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H. W. Mesfield

A

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OR,

FIFTEEN YEARS' EXPERIENCES IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND.

A NEW EDITION.

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NOTE.

THE narrative given in the following pages derives any interest it possesses from its being a plain statement of facts, and the record of a varied and unusual experience.

THE AUTHOR.

A CHEQUERED CAREER.

CHAPTER I.

ETON—GERMANY AND EARLY SCRAPES.

In the year 1846 an interesting ceremony took place in the ante-chapel of one of our oldest cathedrals. When I assert that it was interesting, I merely mean to those concerned. I was very much concerned. It was my christening; and as I had the advantage of having two dignitaries of the Church to answer for me, and promise in my name all sorts of things, which I regret to say I have never performed, I doubtless felt myself to be the centre of attraction on that occasion.

As a boy I was delicate, and consequently a good deal spoilt and over-indulged. Taking

every advantage of the allowance thus made for me, I was rather behind other boys of my age when I was entered on the Eton College books.

A youngster feels considerable pride at becoming an Eton boy. He regards all private-school boys, in fact all boys who do not happen to be Etonians, with supreme contempt.

My first night at my Dame's was a delightful one. There was the new Brussels carpet—Brussels chiefly in the bill—my new bureau, and the little cupboard in the corner containing my breakfast-things.

What unpacking and arranging of new possessions! What hanging up of newly framed prints, sent from town on purpose to adorn my room! And then what a comparing of watches and divers treasures with the other new boys!

And when bedtime arrived, what delight to watch the old 'boys' maid' open the cupboard bedstead, and, by letting down a mysterious apparatus that resembled a drawbridge of the olden time on a miniature scale, convert the sitting-room into a bedroom in the twinkling of an eye, just as skilfully as a harlequin could do it at Drury Lane Pantomime!

My Dame's house was one of the oldest in College, and faced the upper school. It was a long, low-built sort of old barrack, with wonderfully intricate passages, where you had suddenly three steps to go down, and then four to go up, dark corners where rooms cropped up in the most unexpected manner, and awfully mysterious green-baize doors in the centre of precipitous staircases which were supposed by tradition to lead to the Dame's part of the house.

In the year that I am writing of it was the custom to examine all the new boys in order to find out what part of the school they were best fitted for.

I was placed in middle fourth, and my friend and messmate during the whole time that I was at Eton was placed in the same division. He was a strong, big-framed lad, of a good kindly disposition; not over-talented, and more likely to distinguish himself at football and rowing than at Latin verse.

We had different tutors, although we resided at the same Dame's.

Our division was composed chiefly of new boys. It was a large one; and a young master only

lately from Cambridge was in charge of it. New boys are fifty times more troublesome than old ones; and all the bad tricks of fifty different private schools were exhibited in our division. I do not believe that one man was ever plagued with a more unruly lot of young cubs.

Mr. Sweet, the master, was of a gentle disposition, and had no desire to punish where he could possibly substitute reasoning. But he might as well have attempted to reason with a cage full of monkeys, and tell them to cease chattering.

We were 'up'—*i.e.*, in school—in a room belonging to another master, Mr. Week. It was in a tower, and overlooked the wall where Spankie and Levi sold their meretricious wares. Stancliffe, my friend, and I asked permission to sit in a recess by the window. This recess was behind Mr. Sweet's desk. We had already been very troublesome, but obtained leave to sit there with the caution that if we misbehaved again, our misdemeanours would not be visited by the usual 'pœna,' but by a complaint to the head-master.

Being complained of, means being swished. We accepted the terms, and for the space of three

whole days I verily believe we were very good. But it became monotonous. Good-behaviour was not in our line, and the spirit of mischief prevailed.

Behind our seat was this tempting casement window—little diamond panes set in lead, dating probably from the era of Queen Anne. What Vandals we were! I verily believe we were possessed by some of those devils that dwelt in the hearts of the Puritans at the time of the Commonwealth.

Steadily we began our work of desecration. We loosened the panes, and secured the lead. The latter we saved for catapulting, an amusement only indulged in by lower boys. Day after day we kept at it, varying our labour by pelting stray butcher boys who were rash enough to pass that way.

At last the whole window was demolished. The iron frame alone remained, and that we had the impudence to lift from its hinges and place in the empty fireplace. What astonishes me, even to the present day, is that our master never noticed the slow but certain destruction of the College property.

I expect he was too much worried by the rest of the division. One day we were shifted to upper school. This is a large hall capable of holding three divisions at one time. The old oak panels in that hall are carved all over with the names of boys of former days. Four of my name of this generation have left their signatures there. When a boy leaves school, he 'tips' the Provost's butler to have his name carved. There are names there that might interest a visitor of a reflective turn of mind.

On our evacuating the tower, Mr. Week, the original proprietor, took possession. The first thing he noticed was the lack of window. When he left the room there had been twenty diamond panes! Where were they? Perhaps Mr. Sweet's division could account for the deficiency.

Mr. Week's præpositor was accordingly sent round with a note to Mr. Sweet.

Mr. Sweet frowned ominously as he read it, and 'coloured up.' He was no doubt annoyed that his division should have so misbehaved themselves; and perhaps felt a little ruffled at such a flagrant breach of discipline having escaped his notice. He addressed the division, and wound

up by informing us that unless the criminal or criminals stood up, and owned to their fault, he would be under the painful necessity of imposing a general punishment.

I do not know exactly how Stancliffe took this announcement. I can pretty well guess by my own sensations. I wished myself anywhere else than where I was. Of course, as there was nothing else to be done but 'stand up,' we stood up. If there had been any other possible loophole we would no doubt have availed ourselves of it.

We said, 'Please, sir,' and I think that's about all. We were complained of.

At five o'clock school the sixth form præpositor made his awful appearance. Stancliffe and Dingo to 'stay.' Now, to 'stay' means that we had to go and make the acquaintance of Dr. Goodford after school. It was a cold November night, and I dare say that caused us to shiver just a little bit, as we stood, hat in hand, waiting until the solemn Doctor had accepted and approved of the 'bills' of the præpositors of the various divisions. He then motioned us to accompany him up the flight of steps that lead to the swishing-room.

With what an interest and curiosity ladies inspect that swishing-room, and the block whereon their little brothers have suffered. On the fourth of June and Speech Days, when the College is thrown open for the inspection of visitors, many a delicate lady's hand smooths that altar of repentance.

We entered the delightful apartment in rear of the Doctor, brought up by two small collegians —'tugs'—and the big sixth-form præpositor. The duty of the small collegians on such occasions is to hold up any portion of your garments that might interfere with the birch taking proper effect.

The door was locked, and the Doctor, in a suave manner, inquired whether we had anything to say in reply to the charge. Simultaneously we replied:

'First fault, please, sir!'

Dr. Goodford did not seem to see it. He said, if it had been a complaint for idleness, he would have listened to 'First fault;' but wilful naughtiness of this description must be atoned for. So the big præpositor opened a cupboard and produced two birches of a terrible length.

Eton birches are from four to five feet long; but to my youthful imagination those birches were ten feet at least. The Provost's or head-master's butler was supposed to make a profit of five shillings on each birch. In my time his perquisites were worth having. An old weapon is never used. The buds are apt to come off and adhere to a portion of the victim's body. The buds once off, the birch is comparatively harmless.

Down we went. Stancliffe first, as he was placed before me in division. Twelve cuts. Then I took my turn. T-t-t-wit! t-t-t-wit! I don't believe I liked it one bit.

The ceremony over, we ran across to my Dame's, heroes in the eyes of all the other new boys. We were as proud of that swishing as if we had just received an order of merit. When my tutor spoke to me at 'private' that evening, even he seemed to chuckle. Certainly he remarked that it was a pity that I could not go through the school without a swishing, but he evidently fell back for comfort on the fact that it was only 'mischief.'

I am afraid that, morally, I was not benefited by the indignity, though I richly deserved it. I

know that I gained considerable κυδος from the operation. This was my first misdemeanour, but not by any means my last. I do not think I was very much worse than most boys, but my volatile disposition and utter disregard for the 'venerable' frequently got me into scrapes. In 1862 there were a great many customs in full swing at Eton, that I believe have since been abolished by the Royal School Commissioners. One does not like to think of any great changes in one's old school, but there is no doubt there were many things that required reform in all of our public schools. In my time mathematics was grossly neglected, and modern languages, drawing, etc., all came under the head of extras.

It was compulsory to touch one's hat to one of the schoolmasters—*i.e.*, one of the classical masters—but it was optional to salute a mathematical master in a like manner. This at once lowered the general respect for all masters save those who taught the classics, though I am sure that in point of social standing and breeding there was not a hair's turn in the scales.

I do not think that above twenty per cent. of the boys learnt French or German. For all that,

if a boy was studious and anxious to learn, and his father paid for all these 'extras,' he had plenty of opportunity of improving his mind. Unfortunately, the average of boys are not studious or willing to learn, and the majority of parents and guardians are under the impression that 'languages' can be easily picked up after the lad has left Eton.

Looking back upon the summer half at Eton, with its bathing and boating and boyish scrapes, I think that it is about the pleasantest part of one's life. But to dwell on Eton would be tedious to any but old Etonians.

The time arrived for me to leave, and it was decided that I should be sent to Germany, and there acquire a knowledge of foreign languages, with a view of entering the Civil Service.

An old servant of my father's accompanied me as far as Paris, and there deposited my luggage and person in a night express for Strasbourg. On the platform at Strasbourg I was met by the Herr Professor to whose charge I was committed, and who had travelled from the south of Germany to meet me. He was an excellent type of the German Jew. He breathed very hard—smelt

very nasty—and had a flabby damp hand—a thing I never could stand. His articulation was guttural, and he was garrulity itself. When he conversed, he had the delightful habit of putting his face very close to mine, which initiated me into the mysteries of garlic and 'lager bier,' and produced a sensation in my stomach close akin to sea-sickness.

The town in which the Professor resided was the resort of a great many English—impoverished families and debilitated Indian officers in search of new constitutions. Of course there was a Kursaal and the usual abominable waters; and there was also the average amount of backbiting, evil-speaking, and slandering invariably indulged in by small and enlightened communities.

The Professor kept a school. There were about thirty boarders, all English boys. Two other lads and I were received as parlour-boarders. The term parlour-boarder meant—so we interpreted it—that in consideration of our parents paying about double fees, we had a right to do exactly as we pleased. Our rooms were private, and our lessons—when we took any—private also.

Our meals were served in the Professor's private parlour.

We spent our days very often after this fashion: Breakfast at nine or ten a.m., very often in our respective bedrooms. Smoke pipes and kick heels about until eleven a.m. Go for a stroll, or a bathe in the river. After dinner, play billiards at the Café, or go for a ride—a good deal depended on our being in funds. In the evening, if we were not invited out anywhere, we generally went to the Opera, or Summer Theatre. Just before Lent, masque balls at the Königsbau were our chief delight. There was no attempt at restraint. We had full liberty to be just as vicious as we pleased.

Once or twice the Professor hinted at our taking lessons more regularly, but we took very little notice of him. We treated him with the greatest contempt, and frequently used to get 'his monkey' up, just to break the monotony of our social circle.

Now, if that Herr Professor had only had the sense to give us each a good thrashing, we should have entertained a certain amount of respect for him. But as he did nothing of the sort, we

attributed his long-sufferance to want of physical courage.

Foreigners do not understand English boys; and English boys, who go abroad after having been at large public schools, have great contempt for them as masters.

I spent ten months in Germany, and at the end of that period knew about as much German as might be instilled into an ordinary boy in a fortnight.

I blame myself entirely for not having learnt something of the language, because it was within my power to take as many lessons as I wished. I regret to say that I much preferred the canon game on the French tables, and colouring meerschaum cigar-holders.

To send boys to an English school in Germany, with the view of learning German, is a farce. It is not an advisable thing to send boys to any place of English resort. If sent to some place where they *must* speak the language of the country to be understood, it would be astonishing how rapidly and easily they would learn it.

When I contemplate my visit to that Herr

Professor, I perceive my faults and acknowledge the amiability of his disposition. I left him in wrath. To know that he had quite forgiven me, would be soothing to my feelings.

CHAPTER II.

YE CITIE OF LONDON—A SHIPBROKER'S OFFICE—CLERKS IN GENERAL—DINGO IN PARTICULAR.

AFTER a few months' idling at home, my father came to the conclusion that I was not likely to shine in a Civil Service examination. My German was on this scale: 'Kellner, geben sie mir ein Flasch Wein;' or 'Wie viel ist es für das Billiards?' My French perhaps was a shade or two 'wuss,' as the chorus in Polly Perkins has it: I knew what 'ici bas' meant, and thought it a very jolly 'ici bas.' My father's ideas of business were about as vague as my own. He observed, however, that business was productive of wealth, and wealth supplied people with the good things generally desired in this life. So he concluded that it must be a first-rate thing for a lad to take to business when young. Now I thought nothing

of the sort. The city was associated in my mind with twopenny omnibuses laden with cadaverous, unhealthy-looking young *women*, in seedy black suits, who gave one the idea of living on penny buns, and as much smell of cookshops as they could inhale during their luncheon-hour.

'Let me have a commission, father, or learn farming, or something of that sort.'

A 'commission' meant a respectable regiment, a good allowance, and more billiards.

'Farming' meant shooting rabbits in tweed coats and gaiters, and an occasional run with the harriers.

'Something of that sort' meant simply nothing at all; but left a margin for any pleasant life of idleness that could be suggested.

'If you could only manage to drink water, my boy, when your brother officers were drinking champagne, I should not object to a commission for you. But somehow or other I do not fancy you could,' said my dear old pater.

He had a very good idea of my character, and was perfectly right in supposing that even at that age I infinitely preferred champagne to water, and had an ambition to live as well as my fellows.

So the end of it was, I was invited to a great city lunch at the business place of one of our merchant princes.

Through the interest of this magnate I was introduced to a ship-broking firm in Leadenhall Street.

The first morning I honoured the city of London with my attendance at business I drove down in a hansom cab, attired to my notion of perfection. Hat, boots, and umbrella irreproachable, button-hole, and lavender kids, constituted the chiefest portion of what I considered a faultless get up. In the city, people are careless generally as to dress. There is no time to spare for such vanities.

Occasionally you see a well-dressed banker's clerk or two, or some waif from the West End, who has apparently lost his way; but in a busy ship-broker's office where the clerks *are* clerks, you will become acquainted with coats of the 'shiny at the elbows' description, and hats unblessed with nap. As to gloves, they are unknown in office hours.

Our office was very small and very stuffy. It was up a steep and narrow staircase, and if its

windows looked out anywhere, the prospect must have been of the chimney-pot style of landscape. The windows, however, were of a yellowish hue, such as to suggest a perpetual state of fog on the exterior, or else a serious derangement of one's liver.

On my return to dinner after my first day in the city, my brother inquired how I liked it. I replied that I did not like it at all, and that they were all 'an awful lot of cads.' This probably included the Lord Mayor and the beadle on the Exchange.

One day a ship was leaving for Natal, and I was sent off to deliver some papers of importance to the captain. This was rather in my line, as I was fond of poking about the shipping. Delivering messages properly, however, was not at all in my line. It being near luncheon-time, according to my internal reminders, I dived into a tempting cook-shop, lunched, and left my papers!

I went down to the ship, saw the captain, had a glass of wine and a chat about Natal, and never gave the firm, papers, or business a thought. On my return to the office, the firm inquired whether I had delivered the papers safely.

'Well, by Jove!' I replied, 'I forgot all about them. I must have left them in that infernal cook-shop.'

I evidently was not cut out for business. That evening I had a late trip down to Gravesend. I found the ship all right, moored out in the stream, and explained the matter to the captain. He was one of those jolly old sea-dogs who rather enjoyed a little irregularity, and he roared over the misadventure. The firm, curious to relate, were not at all amused at my way of doing business, and I fancy that one of them muttered something about an 'anointed young pup,' whatever that meant.

The life did not suit me. In six weeks from the time of my first entering on a business career, I positively refused to go any more.

So the city of London lost me for ever. I wonder if it has ever got over it?

CHAPTER III.

OFF TO NEW ZEALAND—ADVICE TO EMIGRANTS.

About this period I made the acquaintance of a gentleman who had lately sold out of the army, and who intended to settle with his wife and family in New Zealand.

It occurred to me that the life of a settler, in a savage land, must needs be a very pleasant one. Accordingly I looked up all the books ever written on New Zealand, and my mind was soon aglow with pine forests, log huts, dashing rivers, and Maoris paddling their own canoes. My very dreams were of the Robinson Crusoe existence that I pictured to myself. In short, I fully determined that to New Zealand I would go.

When my parents saw that I was set on emigration, they quietly and sorrowfully assented; and nothing was thought of or talked about in our

family circle but my approaching departure. The great question was my outfit. I required a very large assortment indeed.

A word of advice to young men about to emigrate. The fewer impedimenta you hamper yourselves with, the better. A portmanteau, a draft on the Bank, and a little common sense in using it, will be found far more useful, on arrival, than a baggage train. And if you are only going out to the colonies with the intention of 'playing the fool,' and imagine that you will not have to work for your living when you get there, pause a while. You can go to the devil as well in the colonies as at home, with this difference: when once you start on the road '*ad Inferos*,' you will arrive at your destination in about half the time you would take in the Old Country. You are better known, therefore more quickly shunned. Many young fellows are sent out to Australia or New Zealand 'because they drink,' or 'because they have been too fast.' Parents, console yourselves with this fact: if your children do not behave themselves under your wing at home, there is little hope of their redemption in a climate where the temptation to indulge in every excess is a thousand times

stronger than in England. Besides, Australians are now quite alive to the theory that has hitherto existed, that their colonies are regarded as a huge dusthole for the unsavoury rubbish of the Old Country to be shot into. How often have I heard remarked, 'By-the-bye, what became of So-and-so?' 'Oh, he went to Australia;' which implied, 'Oh, he went to the dogs.' 'To go to Australia' ought to imply nothing of the sort, though a good many who go to Australia do go to the dogs. But then they would have done the same thing if they had gone to Kamschatka.

If a young man on arrival in Australia betrays any vicious propensities, no matter what position in society he is entitled to, he will speedily receive the cold shoulder from all, except the unvarnished loafers, who hang around him until his money is done, and to which class ere long he will probably belong.

Writing from Bohemia, it may seem absurd that I should give advice. My advice, however, is not for Bohemian brothers—they can take care of themselves; it is for the silly boys who, recklessly following their own bent, take no heed of the aching hearts at home.

Lads going out to the colonies very often go out with an excited imagination, expecting to find everything very different to what they have been accustomed to at home. There is really but little difference in the ways and customs of Australians, or in the appearance of their principal cities, to English customs and English towns. But there is far more chance for a lad to get on in the world in Australia than in England, if he has steadiness and perseverance to aid him. If he is not steady, he might just as well remain at home, unless he seriously intends to commence a new chapter.

When the good ship *Star of Italy* was being towed down the Thames, I had as much idea of the country I was going to, or the life I was to lead there, as most young fellows have, under similar circumstances. My impressions were then partly founded on Mayne Reid, and a good deal on De Foe. Everybody has read descriptions of sea voyages. Our voyage out was in no way out of the common. At the beginning, most of the passengers are sick. When they get their 'sea-legs' they become frolicsome. Towards the end of a long voyage they are generally fractious and disagreeable. People get uncommonly tired of

each other when cooped up for twelve weeks without the slightest employment, and 'yellow poison' for their chief literature. Long sea voyages are going out of date. The ocean steamers have taken all the passenger trade, and unless a man requires a voyage to recruit his health, he never dreams of going in a sailing-ship nowadays. Personally, I like a long sea trip. One is so thoroughly emancipated for the time from all the troubles and worries of life.

The juvenile portion of our community loafed, smoked, skylarked, and played whist in the evening. The elderly people loafed, smoked, spun incredible yarns, and also played whist in the evening. There were two Frenchmen on board, who were rather entertaining. On the first Sunday after our departure from Plymouth, these youngsters were playing *écarté* on the skylight on the poop. The deck was being prepared for service, but they took not the slightest notice. Our old skipper walked past them several times, and coughed in a menacing manner; but the innocence of any irregularity in their conduct preserved the equanimity of their deportment. The skipper could stand it no longer.

'Do you know, gentlemen, that during the whole of my nautical experience I never witnessed such a disgraceful breach of the Sabbath as this! Playing cards on my poop on the Lord's day! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves.'

Now, as one of the young Frenchmen did not understand any English at all, and the other but little, the pith of these remarks went for nothing. They understood that the old gentleman objected to the cards, and they knew he had the power to enforce his objection. The one who could speak a little English replied:

'Vera good—you no like the cartes? Mon Dieu! vat a melancholly triste nation are this English.'

They retired to their cabin, shut the door, and played *écarté* until the lights were put out.

One of these youths went to the Fiji Islands a few years afterwards. I met him in New Zealand on his return from that then 'rowdy location.' I asked him how he liked the islands, and what he did whilst there. I could obtain but very little information from him. The only recollection he seemed to have was the following:

'Well! I tell you one ting I did remark at Levuka. I visit the hotel, and propose to myself a game of billiard. I go into the billiard-salon, and one rude fellow, to whom I have not the honour of introduction, ask me if I play with him the game—a low fellow, and his hands very black. I say to him, "Sir, when I play the game billiard, I play it with a gentleman!" And what think you? He black my eye!'

Perhaps he blacked both eyes, and thus prevented my friend from seeing very much of the islands whilst he was there.

After a voyage of one hundred and sixteen days —she was a slow old tub—we dropped anchor opposite the North Shore in Auckland harbour.

CHAPTER IV.

AUCKLAND—NAPIER—ON A SHEEP STATION.

WHEN I beheld Auckland harbour from the deck of the *Star of Italy*, I thought I never saw a more beautiful sight in my life. On entering the harbour, we sailed past a number of islands and rocky islets covered with scrub and timber down to the water's edge.

Rangitoto is an extinct volcanic island, and appears to form a sort of natural breakwater to the harbour. I cannot say positively that Rangitoto has that effect on the harbour, but to a landsman's eye it has the position I have described. Amongst others, there is Graham's Island, which has a number of sheep depastured thereon. Kanau is the island residence of Sir George Grey. It is about thirty miles from Auckland, but unfortunately I had no opportunity of visiting

it. It has the reputation of Paradise, with all the latest improvements. I believe there are deer turned out there, and all sorts of birds acclimatized. The copper mines at one time were of considerable value, but I do not think that they are worked at the present day.

Of course, we were all very anxious to behold the noble Maori. The specimens one sees about the Auckland wharves and streets are not fair ones. I beheld far better in other parts of the island.

Squatting about the quays they offer fish or fruit for sale, or solicit alms with the effrontery of a Neapolitan beggar. Their object is the 'nobbler.' They are of a low type, these Maoris who frequent the towns, and have lost their savage self-respect through an addiction to the bottle—in which failing they are by no means peculiar.

Parnell is a very pretty suburb of Auckland. From it you can look down on the Waitemata harbour, with its islands, and bays, and ships at anchor; and all around you are villas, with shady verandas and gardens, perfuming the soft air with the fragrance of their flowers. The English

Bishop's house was in Parnell, and Bishop Selwyn, of revered memory, lived there at the time of my arrival.

After a few days' sojourn in Auckland, we took steamer for Napier, which is the chief town of the Province of Hawkes Bay, and is situated on the east coast, about three hundred miles south of Auckland.

Napier cannot boast of a harbour. There is only an open roadstead, and without wishing to raise the premiums of insurance to that port, I must say I think it is about as unsafe a roadstead as there is on the New Zealand coast. My reason for thinking so is, that a good many vessels were lost there during my three or four years' residence.

In the year 1865, Napier was not a particularly bustling place. There was only one small attempt at a street, and all the houses were built of wood. The few shops in this street were of a miscellaneous description—sort of mercantile Noah's Arks. They contained a little of all sorts.

'Ladies' linen, muslins, or anything in that way, ma'am? What for you, sir? Two pounds of cheese? Yes, sir. Tasted our newly-imported sherry, sir? Very fine. Mr. Jones, that gentle-

man, there, wants to look at some nail-brushes—just attend to him, please.'

If you required to be measured for a new suit of clothes, you merely had to walk the length of the shop, and a young man would show you all the latest fashions, and take your fit. Boots or tobacco; ton of flour or sugar—all on hand, from a meerschaum pipe to a breech-loader. These 'stores' do a very large trade with the Maoris, and allow them to run very heavily into their debt for saddles, guns, groceries, etc. When they are pretty well in the books, the storekeepers summon them to the Court. Judgment is given against the natives, and in place of payment the storekeeper accepts a piece of land, or a mortgage on some native property. The matter having been arranged, the Maori is once more allowed credit to any amount, until a time for settlement again arrives, and so on.

I was bound for a sheep station only twenty-five miles from Napier. In New Zealand the distances are so trifling, when compared to those in Australia, that it sounds irrational to have sheep stations within twenty-five miles of a town. But the country is quite different to any in Australia,

and some of it is so broken and rough, as to be quite useless for any purpose save grazing sheep. The sheep pastured on these rough lands acquire the agility of goats, and many of them become quite wild.

My chief anxiety was to have a pig-hunt, and I felt rather grieved at not seeing any wild pigs on our ride up to the station. I had plenty of that sort of fun not long afterwards, and found it an unprofitable amusement. The house at the station was a very comfortable wooden building, with verandas, garden, etc.: far too grand altogether to suit my Robinson Crusoe ideas.

A young fellow who came out with me from England was on the same run; but we were judiciously separated, and sent to learn the art of sheep-farming at different out-stations. At these out-stations there are shepherds or boundary-riders stationed.

My friend went to his out-station a few days before me, and I rode over with him to see what an out-station was like. It was only six miles off, but my Australian friends will smile when I tell them it took us two hours to ride.

The track led us round the foot of a mountain,

over a piece of country that appeared to have been, at some time or other, chopped and carved in every direction by some gigantic convulsion of nature. Ravines and gullies with steep cliffs are very picturesque and pleasant to the eye of an artist; but when you have to get off your horse every hundred yards, and slide down a precipice, with the comforting feeling that the horse is coming on the top of you, I must say that I prefer a macadamised road. We had a pack-horse with us, on which we had strapped a mattress portmanteau, and a wooden canteen containing everything, from cut glass to a pepper-box.

Six months later, we were in the habit of carrying a single blanket and a tin pannikin. But at this period we were 'new chums.' We got on pretty well until we came to a narrow cutting that led us down into a gorge about one hundred feet deep. The path was so narrow that the old pack mare kept rubbing the mattress against the cliff. This disarranged the pack, and also the old mare. She began to jog—the canteen began to rattle, and we yelled out, 'Wey! Woe!' At last off she went at a canter, the canteen

rattling in a manner that at last caused her to set to kicking. The mattress got under her belly, the canteen rolled down the cliff, followed at a good pace by the portmanteau; and the old mare, having completely disengaged herself of what she evidently considered very unnecessary articles, stopped at the bottom of the gully, and quietly began to feed. Having re-adjusted the pack, we made a fresh start, and arrived at the out-station without further mishap. There was a snug two-roomed house, a good English grass paddock for horses, and other conveniences, such as sheep-yards, etc. One of those beautiful rivers, for which New Zealand is so celebrated, flowed through the little valley in which the out-station was situated.

New Zealand rivers seem as if Nature had designed them for salmon and trout. Rapid streams, tearing away over boulders and rocks, with here and there deep, silent pools; they can boast of no better fish than eels. There is a wretched little fish called the Inunga, but that is generally found in small creeks where crayfish also abound.

In Lake Taupo there is a small fish about the

size of a good gudgeon, which in rough weather is washed up on the beach in large numbers. The Pukarora is a fish about the size of a herring, but only comes up the rivers at certain seasons of the year—about the commencement of winter, I think.

In the Middle Island trout have been introduced successfully. No doubt, in time, there will be fine trout and salmon fishing in the North Island.

Having seen my friend housed, I left him. It is a very great change for a young fellow who has been bred up in the comfort of an English home, and used to all the luxuries of life, suddenly to find himself in a shepherd's hut with an uneducated companion. It is a very good thing for a lad to rough it, no doubt, and a necessary part of his training that he should learn to cook, kill sheep, and work in a yard amongst sheep. Still, I am not equally certain that the close companionship of station-hands is so desirable. Boys of nineteen or twenty are very apt to fall into the ways of their associates, and imitate language and habits that, if their respected parents were to see and hear, would be likely to cause their hair to stand on end.

The out-station that I went up to was about seventeen miles from the head-station, and the mountains and forest around it pleased me immensely. I was particularly fortunate in having a very decent companion for a 'mate.' His father was a respectable tradesman in England, and he had 'come out to try his luck.' Our duties consisted in riding about and turning the sheep back if they strayed beyond bounds. The country was entirely unfenced, but bounded naturally by rapid rivers. Sheep-farming in New Zealand is a very different thing to sheep-farming in Australia. There is nothing to hurt or worry the sheep in New Zealand, unless it is a Maori dog or two; and a few carefully laid baits in the neighbourhood of a Maori Pah soon make the owners of the dogs more careful as to tying them up. In Australia sheep are either in large paddocks which are boundary-ridden, or else they are shepherded and yarded every night. The sheep on our run in Hawkes Bay were never disturbed except at mustering-times, and on those occasions it required excellent sheep-dogs and plenty of walking to get them in. The country was so rough, and the sheep so wild,

that we generally dispensed with horses when mustering.

In a few months' time I had learnt all the most important items of a bush education: how to cook, make bread or damper, dress sheep decently in ten minutes, work a dog, work in the yards—all very useful things to know, and a very appropriate finish to a public-school education.

Pigs were so numerous in our part of the country that we seldom rode out without killing some. We killed thirty (big and small) in one day. When it was possible to ride after them, we did so, but the unevenness of the ground was not in favour of sharp gallops. We had a breed of dogs on the station called pig-dogs, a cross between the mastiff and the kangaroo dog. The dog generally caught the pig, and held him, whilst we operated on him with a sheath-knife. The New Zealand wild pig, if young and fat, and not living too near the coast (where they feed upon dead fish, etc.), is very delicious. The pigs inland rely entirely for their food on the edible fern-root, which at one time constituted the chief food of the natives.

Although there were plenty of station horses,

of course I invested in a couple for my own private use. All young fellows have a weakness in this respect. One was a little bay, and had only been backed a few times. He bucked me off more times than I can remember, and I began to get 'full' of him. George, my mate, proposed Rarey-fying him. The process consisted in breathing up his nose; but we unluckily omitted the strapping up of his near fore-leg. One of Rarey's theories was that the breath of man inhaled into the horse's nostrils intimidated the animal.

George volunteered to blow up his nose, and I held him by the ear with a twitch.

'All right, George?'

'Right, sonny.'

He blew, and the little bay struck out as straight as a dart, hitting George below the belt, and laying him flat on his back. I did not think much of that part of Rarey's system.

Not many miles from our hut there was a Maori Pah, and we used to visit there frequently. The chief, Te Whetu, was an excellent fellow, and a staunch 'Queen's man.' The Pah was on the Mohaka river, and was merely a collection of

whares (huts). It was only an occasional place of residence for the tribe. Maoris like to shift their quarters now and then. They have villages all over the country, and potato-grounds at each. When potatoes run short at one place, or they want a change, they go to the next village, where there is a crop ready for digging, or a quantity carefully stored.

It is amusing to see a Maori exodus, with their strings of horses and dogs; old women swearing, matrons staggering along under burdens, and young women riding straddle-legs, with short black pipes in their mouths, and their comely unbooted feet in the stirrup-irons. Their comely feet might perhaps be comelier if washed more frequently.

Not that the Maoris are a very dirty race, but they do everything by fits and starts. At the hot springs in Taupo they take a great delight in their daily ablutions; but in cold weather, and in parts where there are no hot springs, I do not think that washing often occurs to them.

The Maori girls are very pretty, and charming in their ways. They are not strait-laced or over-burdened with modesty: they are anxious to

please, have fine teeth, beautiful eyes, and luxuriant hair; but the latter generally betrays the want of the comb.

The men are born diplomatists, and the hardest of bargainers. They like to have a great deal of talk prior to entering into any undertaking. If you were trying to lease a piece of country from them, you would get uncommonly tired before any reasonable offer for it was accepted.

My life on the 'run' was very jolly, but the diet execrable. It is all very fine to read about bush-living, or listen to men talking of the 'dampers' that they have made, etc.; but after years of experience, I prefer the good things of this life. Salt mutton and 'damper' sustain existence. They are not fattening, neither do they nurture bile.

CHAPTER V.

A VISIT TO A HAU HAU PAH—THE PAIMARIRE RELIGION —THE BATTLE OF OMARANUI.

THE monotony of our lives was interruped by our discovering, in one of our daily rides, the tracks of a large number of sheep, and the unmistakable naked footprints of Maoris in their rear. We followed them to within a mile or two of a fortified Pah, on the Maunga-hararu range of mountains; and having assured ourselves of their destination, we deemed discretion to be the better part of valour, and rode straight away for the home station to convey the news. At that time there was considerable disaffection amongst the natives in the Lake Taupo district; and Paimarire, the Hau Hau religion, was being fanned into flames by the fanatical priest, Te Ua, and others of less note. The chief objects of the new

religion seemed to be to increase the Maori antipathy to the Pakeha, and create a war of extermination throughout the island. I will describe their form of worship later on.

At the Pah I am speaking of, Titiokura, there was a large gathering of the disciples of Paimarire, assembled at the invitation of the great chief Rangihiroa. I suppose the anxiety to be hospitable on the part of this chief caused him to purloin our mutton.

A few days after we had given notice of the depredation at the station, a native trooper, with a few friendly natives, including our friend Te Whetu, arrived at our hut.

The following day we started for Titiokura. The country I am writing of was not so familiar to the European in 1866 as it is to-day. It is a wild mountainous district, thickly timbered, and at that time the track through the Pohui bush at the foot of Titiokura allowed of only single file on horseback. There is now a mail-coach running all the way to the lake, and stockades at certain distances apart.

The Pah at Titiokura was deserted save by a few old women, who informed us that a general

emigration had taken place to a Pah named Te Haroto—now a military station—which was a few miles on the other side of the river Mohaka. Thither we went. On arriving at the outer Pah, we were detained until Rangihiroa should signify his pleasure for us to advance. A large Hau Hau flag-staff stood in an enclosure, near which we dismounted, and twenty or thirty whares with their usual 'tie-up' fences around them formed the outside Pah.

The Maori boys and girls, who swarmed around us, amused themselves by criticising us, and making impertinent remarks; and after about an hour's detention we received the 'royal' permit to advance. The large Pah was half a mile farther on, and we found about two hundred natives there, most of them, as Te Whetu informed us, from the Taupo district.

Having delivered our horses to the care of some boys to tether out, we entered the enclosure, wherein stood Rangihiroa's whare.

The sun was awfully hot, and we squatted down on a log to see what would be the next proceeding. Albert, the trooper, informed the natives of the object of our embassy, and then several of the

chiefs got up and made speeches. Maoris love speechifying. They speak in the most violent manner, and walk up and down gesticulating in a way that would convince a stranger that they were boiling over with passion. Very likely they are praising you all the while. They always repeat the same thing over a great many times, and unless they make a considerable noise in doing so, they are not looked upon as Disraelis or Gladstones by their own people.

At last the mighty Rangihiroa arose. His robe of state was on this occasion a particularly filthy white blanket. Hitherto his expression had been as inflexible as that of a Lord Chief Justice. His features now relaxed, and wrapping his toga around him, the hoary-headed old cannibal addressed us in what I presumed to be the purest Billingsgate. We all got very bored. When one native got out of wind, another always seemed ready for a 'go in.'

It was nearly sundown when a bell rang, after the measured tones of a church bell. I hoped it was the supper bell. The natives all flocked around a big pole similar to the one we observed at the outer Pah, and prayers commenced. The

priest chanted a sort of litany, and the people took up the responses. It sounded pleasantly, and the groups formed a very striking addition to the picture: the Pah, with its curiously built whares, the forest of dark pines on the left of us, and the magnificent range of mountains in the distance, with the setting sun gilding their fern-clad sides.

The Hau Hau, or Paimarire religion, was a curious mixture of Old Testament stories and traditions, with a strong dash of Maori legends. Spiritism is a very old institution in Maori-land, and conversations with departed spirits, through the medium of the 'tohunga,' were held hundreds of years prior to the arrival of the Pakeha. The 'tohunga' could raise the spirits of departed relations, and the voices of the dead spoke clearly and sensibly in answer to all inquiries, which is a good deal more than can be said of our English spirits.

It cannot be wondered at that a savage people, although gifted with the vigorous intellect of the Maoris, should have been considerably mystified at the intricate faith preached to them by the missionaries.

The part of the new doctrine which most took their fancy was the Old Testament. Such stories as Joseph's dream, and the witch of Endor, had their entire sympathy, and quite coincided with their preconceived notions of the mysterious. Thus after twenty-five or thirty years of intercourse with Europeans, the Maoris founded a religion of their own, much to the chagrin of the missionaries, who had always boasted of the success which Christianity had met with in New Zealand.

Paimarire had its angels, and their flags bore devices of the angel Gabriel. Indeed, Gabriel was rather a prominent person in their faith.

Dreams were prolific, and the 'tohunga' interpreted them *ad libitum*. When they prayed, flags such as I have described were hoisted, and the congregation held up the palms of their hands to feel the wind. I think this was copied from Moses, who did the same thing on one occasion. Hau, in Maori, signifies wind, and the wind was regarded by them as the breath of God, whispering His commands.

Thus they came to be called Hau Haus. The priests preached to them a similar doctrine to the

one that was preached to the Irish in the great rebellion. They told them that if they sincerely believed in Paimarire no English bullets would have the power of hurting them. A very comfortable doctrine to go into action with, but like many more, it was proved to be a fallacy.

Paimarire spread like wildfire throughout the island, and in 1865 things began to look very serious.

The Maoris are an imaginative race, and I hardly think they were in a sufficiently advanced state to thoroughly consider the dogmas of our several Churches.

We remained in the Pah three days, and Rangihiroa acknowledged that some of his people had taken the sheep. We could see that for ourselves, as some of the skins were hanging on the Pah fence. Rangihiroa offered to return what were left, and pay for the others in horses. It was out of our power to make terms or accept payment, but we sent his reply down to town.

I do not know how the affair was settled. Rangihiroa was settled, however, about six months afterwards. He was shot through the head

at Petane, about seven miles from town, when marching down to attack Napier.

When we visited his Pah, he was not quite ready to fight, but he was making preparations.

His men were ultimately divided into two bands, one of which, under the command of Panapa, took possession of the friendly village of Omaranui, about eight miles from Napier. The other smaller company, under Rangihiroa, marched down to surprise the town, on the opposite side; but Major Fraser met them at a bend of the river, and rather astonished them. There were no soldiers in Napier at the time, but the intrepid Colonel of the colonial forces luckily happened to be a resident of Hawkes Bay. He raised a force of nearly three hundred men on the evening of the Maoris seizing Omaranui, and marched them out of the town at ten o'clock at night. At daylight next morning, the rebels having refused all terms, the battle commenced, and in about one hour and a half the Pah was in our possession. Twenty-one Maoris were killed, and fifty-eight prisoners taken, many of whom were desperately wounded. On our side there were only two or three killed, and very few

wounded, which suggests either bad shooting on the Maoris' side, or good cover on ours.

Omaranui will ever be a feather in the cap of the Napier boys. There were no regular troops employed, and although commanded by the most gallant and experienced officer of New Zealand, our force was an unorganised one, never under fire before. The townspeople were roused from their homes to turn out and fight. They marched out in the dark night to attack a Pah full of rabid Hau Hau's, and they succeeded in taking it. These men were of a class not given to the use of offensive arms. Many of them had never handled anything more terrible in their lives than a yard-measure. There was an Omaranui medal struck in England, and sent out to each individual who was engaged.

My fellow-cadet and I were out of the scrimmage. We were up on the station. On the morning of the fight we rode down, armed with a flask of brandy and a packet of sandwiches for the commander-in-chief.

We got as far as a place named Puketapu, when we were met by some of the victors returning from the 'bloody field.' On learning the

glorious news we held a council, and decided on drinking the health of our general in his brandy and polishing off his sandwiches. We then galloped back to the station to relieve the anxiety of the ladies congregated there. There was considerable cause for uneasiness on their part, as numbers of armed natives had been galloping past the station for several days.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BAY OF ISLANDS—MISSIONARIES—A JOLLY PRIEST—HARD UP—COOK ON BOARD A COASTER—TIMBER LUMPING—MY FRIEND THE BUTCHER.

My sheep-farming experiences did not turn out successfully. To enter into the why and wherefore is not necessary, neither would it be interesting. If I had been fortunate and my flocks had multiplied, I should have had none of the following colonial adventures to relate.

In relating them, and the multifarious positions in colonial society that I have filled, I must draw attention to the fact that there is no better place in the world, for a man without money, than the Australian colonies. If a man is willing to work, and accept the first thing that turns up, he need never be long 'out of collar.'

In England an indigent gentleman must needs

wear good clothes, even if his stomach or his tailor suffer for it. He cannot put on the fustian of a lower class and turn his attention to manual labour. He cannot obtain a situation without a character, and possibly his character might be the very means of preventing him from obtaining employment.

In the colonies, the character of being 'a willing chap' is quite sufficient to keep a man from starvation, at all events. The love of adventure and novel experience, in my Bohemian disposition, made it comparatively easy for me to adapt myself to any new phase in life. Whatever my companions and fellows might be for the nonce, I speedily became 'one of them.'

I am quite confirmed in my belief that some men are born Bohemians, and that a restless spirit within them completely unfits them for any methodical line of life.

It is to the roving disposition of Englishmen that we are in reality indebted for our colonies. No nation in the world is so thoroughly inoculated with gipsy blood as the English. Love of discovery and adventure is born in them. But some possess an over-share of what is in modera-

tion an excellent quality, and the consequence is that they never settle down to anything.

At the age of twenty-one I was in Auckland, and funds were low. I thought that I would take a run up to the Bay of Islands, which is a settlement nearly ninety miles north of Auckland. I knew a settler there, and it occurred to me that I might get something to do through his assistance.

I left Auckland in a small ketch of about thirty tons. At that time there were no steamers running to the bay, and these little coasters were the only means of communication. With light and variable winds it took us about thirty hours.

I was reading a story the other day, in one of the home magazines, of a missionary who was blown out to sea from the Bay of Islands when fishing off Cape Brett. He commences by saying that he is a clergyman of the Church of England, and that he is about to tell the truth. He goes on to say that the wind set in off the land and blew him out to sea. Having lost sight of New Zealand, he arrived next morning at an island, where he landed. His boat was dashed to pieces on the rocks, and he remained on the island alone for six months. He does not say how large the

island was, but there was a forest on it of such an extent that he was frightened to venture too far into it for fear of losing himself. So it was no small island. I began to wonder what island this could possibly be, and searched the latest chart of New Zealand in order to discover it. The Great Barrier is a large island, and is heavily timbered. There are a number of sawyers there. But the Great Barrier is well in sight of the mainland, and has always been much frequented by natives. The Hen and Chickens, and Poor Knights, are simply scrub-covered islets, for I sailed past them all. But my clergyman could not have meant them, or the Great Barrier, for a wind that would blow him in their direction from Cape Brett would have blown him towards the mainland. The fact is, there is no such island as he described on the chart, and therefore it does not exist. The story evidently originated in a nightmare: but such stories, when published as true ones, mislead people who are interested in the country that they concern.

On the second evening after our departure from Auckland, we sighted Kororareka (Russell). The harbour at the Bay of Islands is an excellent

one, and there is deep water close up to the township. In 1866 there were not more than two hundred people in Kororareka. Everything was in a very stand-still condition. The old convent and some other tolerably good buildings gave the place an air of greater importance than it possessed on closer inspection. The hotel that we patronized was roomy, unfurnished, or next door to it, and unlicensed. The landlord was evidently astonished at beholding customers; but as he was one of those individuals who exist in a chronic state of yawn and slippers, I dare say he was easily astonished.

Kororareka has never recovered the sacking that Hone Heke gave it in 1845. He pillaged it properly. The residents found shelter on board the English and French men-of-war then in harbour, and Heke had it all his own way. He cut down the British flagstaff, and burnt half the town. The Roman Catholic Chapel was standing when I visited the place, as it stood just after the disturbance, riddled with bullet-holes. A priest showed me round the place, and told me all the history of its former glory, when as many as twenty or thirty whalers were anchored in the

bay at one time, and the Imperial troops kept everyone alive with drums and bugle-calls.

This priest had only four families to minister to. His salary was a slender one. He dug his own garden, grew his cabbages, and sang a good song to his own accompaniment on the harmonium. So I consider that he was a jolly priest, and took life like a philosopher.

The old military barracks and stores still stood, dilapidated monuments of better days. In the good old whaling days the bay was a gay place, if you can call a place gay in which are occasionally a dozen crews of different ships all 'on the spree' together. But the whaling trade is nothing like it used to be there, and only a stray whaler or two find their way up to Rororareka nowadays. The land in the neighbourhood of the Bay of Islands is not of a rich description, but the scenery is exquisite. Most of the good land, in 1867, was in the possession of one of the missionary families. Missionaries had very liberal views as to the meaning of the word 'conversion.' They believed not only in converting the heathen, but also in converting the heathen lands into snug farms and homesteads.

Nothing excites my indignation more than to see a child drop a penny into a missionary-box. Children in England are taught to revere the missionary, and young ladies' schools are visited by the saintly Mr. Stiggins, who, having cajoled the elderly spinsters that preside over the establishment, gathers the young ladies' contributions into his saintly garner; in other words, into his trousers pocket.

I can remember such a Mr. Stiggins lecturing to the boys at a small school in Oxfordshire, where I spent a few years. He visited all the schools and families where he thought it would pay within a radius of ten miles of the market town. He brought out maps of the different provinces of India in which he said he had resided, and pictures of the native Hindoo putting himself to excruciating tortures in a variety of ways, and finally floating down the Ganges with a couple of revolting vultures perched upon his corpse, and a crocodile bringing up the wake. When we beheld that Hindoo hanging from a beam with hooks through the fleshy parts of his body, and the blood streaming down upon the heads of other Hindoos, whom we were told were his nearest

relations, we felt a great sympathy for him in our tender little hearts. When we were told that by parting with half-a-crown apiece, or as much more as we could afford, we would materially alleviate his sufferings, and improve his condition, we 'shelled out' like little bricks.

Do you good people in England really imagine, when you send a contribution to the fund for converting the Chinese or Ashantees, that you always benefit everyone except the zealous gentleman in the black cloth? If you do you are often much mistaken. The best missionaries I ever knew were those of the Roman Catholic persuasion. I am not of that creed, or an admirer of their doctrines; but I have seen them at work, and have found them unselfish and earnest in administering not only to the spiritual but the bodily wants of their flocks. The Roman Catholic priest has no temptation to acquire private property for himself. All other denominations have this temptation, and—flesh is weak!

After a six weeks' sojourn at the Bay of Islands, I returned to Auckland, and there found myself, for the first time in my life, in a state of impecuniosity. There was something de-

lightfully exciting in the feeling that I had arrived at my last sovereign, and I determined to cut out a line for myself.

I decided on trying the west-coast diggings of the Middle Island. There happened to be a 'rush' on just then. The difficulty was how to get there, as the passage-money in the coasting schooners from the Manukau harbour was five pounds—I possessed only one! My stock of station clothes came in handy on this emergency. I selected a dirty pair of moleskin trousers, a cotton shirt, felt hat, and 'watertight' boots, and astonished my landlady by coming down to breakfast in that costume. I had gone to bed quite a swell. I explained to her that I was 'hard up,' and intended looking for a billet. The kind-hearted old creature actually burst out crying. I had only known her for a week, but women are such puzzles! I walked over to the Orehunga office to see if I could engage to work my passage down to the diggings on board one of the coasters.

In applying for a situation a man should always endeavour to look fit for it. No one, for instance, would dream of engaging a man as gardener or groom if he looked like a barber's clerk, or a prince

in disguise. I suppose I looked like work, for I succeeded in engaging as cook's mate for the run down, there being over thirty diggers as passengers, besides two or three in the cabin. The schooner was anchored near the heads, waiting to take in sawn timber from the mills. Having bade adieu to my pleasant landlady, I embarked that evening in an open boat, with two sailors, three or four diggers, and my sheep-dog 'Wattie.'

I took 'Wattie' with me because I had not the heart to leave him behind. He proved very useful to me at the diggings, and helped me to get my living. The distance from Orehunga (which is almost joined on to Auckland) to the Manukau Heads is about thirty miles. We had the tide against us when about half-way, so we stopped at a 'shanty' on the north shore, and 'spelled' for a couple of hours. I stuck to the bow-oar all the way, and 'Wattie' stuck between my legs, the motion causing him to behave in a manner that proved he had not much stomach for 'sailorising.' About two o'clock in the morning we got alongside the schooner, and I was not sorry. My hands were not as tough as they might have been, and the boat was not a Thames wherry. Having

found a snug place for'ard for the dog, I looked about for a shakedown for myself. I had blankets and my valise, but the only place I could find to crawl into was the hold.

The cargo was not in—but she had a quantity of bricks in the bottom. Did you ever sleep on bricks at the bottom of a ship's hold? For the man who is *blasé* and disgusted to repletion with the pleasures of life, allow me to recommend them as a mattress. The bottom of a vessel being of a somewhat circular formation, the bricks were not as evenly arranged as I have observed them under different circumstances. I slept like a top. When I say that I felt just a trifle stiff and sore about those portions of my body that I reclined upon, you will understand it as the natural consequences of sleeping on a couch of such velvety softness. My slumbers were disturbed by a begrimed and dishevelled individual, who shook me violently by the shoulder.

'Are you the cook's mate, young 'un?'

'Yes,' I replied.

'Then just look "slippy," and come and give us a hand in the galley, there's a good lad. Have a nobbler?'

Therewith, my future mate pulled out a flask of a questionable mixture which he christened dark brandy. We imbibed. Our friendship was at once cemented, in the approved-of colonial manner. In four-and-twenty hours I was quite *au fait*, and as much at home peeling potatoes, scraping out pots and washing up, as if I had been at it all my life. As for my appearance—two hours after I commenced work I am sure my mother would not have known me.

During the passage to the Buller River we encountered very heavy weather. This was rather an advantage to me, as all our digger passengers were in a state of utter prostration, and we had less cooking and messing about than if we had had a fine trip. I am never sea-sick, fortunately. I think that if anything could make a man ill, it would be the variety of smells in a cook's galley on board a New Zealand coaster.

Most respected and respectable reader, let me explain to you, ere you follow me into positions even worse, perhaps, than cook's mate, that I have never 'gone to the dogs.' I have associated with plenty of men who have, and always managed to earn a living amongst that motley crowd that

forms one of the most interesting phases of colonial society. It has often been a matter of regret to me that I could not get hold of a true tale of antipodeal vicissitudes, considering the number of clever men who have wasted the remnants of their lives in gaining such experiences. It is the fashion nowadays for people to take the colonies in the grand tour. They fly round the seven colonies, note-book in hand, and are home again within the twelve months. They write a book. The public read it as colonial experiences, and accept it as the truth. The statistics are probably correct, as they can be purchased for one shilling per volume; the impressions false; the anecdotes all lies, told to them in the smoking-room at the club, and jotted down at two a.m. in their bedrooms on the quiet. To vary the monotony of descriptions of places and scenery, authors invariably have recourse to 'anecdote.' Thus a great many things are written about the colonies that are utterly untrue.

After eight days at sea we arrived off the mouth of the Buller River. The Buller is on the west coast of the Middle Island, and, like all the rivers on this coast, has a dangerous bar at its

mouth. As we crossed the bar we struck so heavily that I fully expected to see some of the spars jumped out. Numbers of small vessels are wrecked on this coast, and to see a steamer or coaster 'stuck on the bar,' with the seas washing over her, is by no means a rare occurrence.

The mountains on the west coast stretch right along the sea-line, covered with dense forest, leaving only a narrow margin of swamp and shingle between their bases and the sea. The numerous rivers that tear their way through these mountain gorges are frequently flooded, and bring down large quantities of shingle, timber, and mud, causing the bars at their entrances to be shifting and dangerous. Westport, the name of the township on the Buller River, at that time consisted of one main street and a quay, on which stood nineteen hotels in a row. Hotels! I should have said canvas 'shanties.' At these places of refreshment grog was retailed at the small charge of one shilling per 'nobbler.' The bars were mostly built of broken-up gin-cases; the walls, roof, etc., of canvas; and the proprietor was, as a rule, of the usual hang-dog class that thrive in such dens.

In the main street there were a few respectable houses, but these were patronised chiefly by the heads of the population, such as bankers' clerks, tradesmen, shipmasters, etc. The great man of all was the Commissioner of Police. He was very much needed there, too. Murders were dreadfully common just then. I had the pleasure of seeing one man waiting for identification with five stabs in the breast.

Our schooner being moored near the beach, we commenced to unload. I was 'taken on' with some others at the rate of two shillings an hour. I earned sixteen shillings the first day, and when I say I *earned* it, I have a strong recollection of carrying timber up a shingle-beach, above high-water mark, under the supervision of a 'timber-clerk,' who was whipper-in on the occasion, and did not believe in sluggards. But the unloading did not last many days, and with two or three pounds in my pocket and 'Wattie' at my heels, I looked for fresh employment. It is of no use going to the diggings without a mate, tent, tools, or a knowledge of digging. I knew this, so deemed it best to make a few pounds, and try and pick up a good mate.

One morning, I called at a large butcher's shop, at the wharf end of the main street. This shop contained a fine show of 'beef, pork, and mutton,' as the song has it; and at a high desk sat a stout, good-looking specimen of the butcher tribe, to whom I applied.

'Good-morning, sir. Do you happen to know any drovers who want a hand up to the Mokihinui, or any of the diggings? I have a stunning good dog. Here, Wattie!'

'No, my boy, don't think I do just at present. Nice-looking dog that. Here, boy! Give him a piece of that scrag of mutton there. Where do you say you come from? North Island, eh? Been on a station? Well, I tell you what you can do, lad. Can you write? Well, write out an advertisement on that sheet of paper, and stick it up on our door there. Call round again to-morrow or next day: might hear of something to suit you. Good-day.'

So I wrote out, 'Wanted by an experienced hand, a billet to drive sheep or cattle. Good dog for sheep. Apply to Messrs. D. and S., within.' And the kindly butcher stuck it up on the door for me.

As I walked away with Wattie trotting by my side, I thought, 'Who says it is a hard world? They know nothing about it, do they, Wattie? It's a pleasant old world, full of brotherly love and good butchers, isn't it, Wattie dear?'

CHAPTER VII.

WEST COAST—R.M. *v.* J.P.—BUTCHERING—NELSON—SULLIVAN THE MURDERER—GAMBLING.

ALTHOUGH everything was very dear on the west coast, and there was no coin in circulation under a shilling, the bars of the numberless canvas 'shanties' were daily thronged by thirsty customers. Not so thirsty perhaps as intemperate. All the digging townships are the same, and if times are good the publican drives a roaring trade. In Melbourne, and the larger cities of Australia and New Zealand, you do not see half as much real vicious drinking. But go back a few hundred miles into the country districts, and you will behold drunkenness in all its different stages of degradation. The rising generation of colonials are, singularly enough, very temperate. The heaviest drinkers are as a rule men who emi-

grated, and are not of colonial birth. Men holding very responsible positions in the colonies have come under my notice as irreclaimable drunkards. Doctors without number, clergymen not a few, and J.P.s by the score.

A few years ago, the Resident Magistrate of Blanktown in New Zealand was, in colonial parlance, a notorious 'swiper.' One evening he fell into the congenial society of a J.P. who enjoyed the same unenviable reputation. They spent the evening together at the Good Fellows Hotel, and they proposed each other's health, and toasted each other, until they arrived at that balmy frame of mind which constitutes perfect freedom from all worldly cares.

The J. P. either was, or fancied himself to be, the most sober of the two, and insisted on seeing the R.M. home. The R.M. lived on a hill about three quarters of a mile from the scene of their carousal. On arriving at the gate, they bade each other an affectionate farewell.

'Goo'-light, ole boy; see you t'-morrow mornin'! Take care o' shelf. All light? Well, goo'-light.'

The bosom of that J.P. swelled with satis-

faction, feeling that he had done his duty and seen his friend safely housed. Who could tell what terrible accident might not have befallen that R.M.?—but for his thoughtful and kindly assistance, the bench might possibly have lost one of its chiefest ornaments! So meditated the J.P. as he attempted to retrace his steps.

Now, whether it was the fresh air, or the walk uphill, or some other cause, remains a mystery. But the way that road wobbled about, and dodged from under his feet, and then as suddenly rose up nearly to his nose, caused our J.P. much perplexity. It was perfectly impossible for anyone who had not got his 'sea-legs' to stand up to it, so after 'canoning' up against several lamp-posts, and apostrophising them in terms that were not becoming, he brought himself up in a gutter, where he lay on his back and cursed the corporation.

It happened, worse luck, that there was a new policeman on beat. One of those ignorant, pig-headed fellows who thought it his duty to take notice of drunken men, instead of going to sleep on a door-step, like a sensible man. On perceiving our J.P. reclining in the gutter, he en-

deavoured to rouse him, but he was beyond rousing. His spirit was far away in the happy land, and all he could articulate was, 'Whisky hot—d'ye hear? *damfool!*'

Having obtained some assistance, our energetic member of the police force had that noble form conveyed to the 'lock-up' and deposited on a stretcher. The snores that emanated from that cherry-coloured proboscis proved that the J.P. imagined himself to be comfortably at home in bed. Next morning, without even having an 'eye-opener,' or a clean paper-collar, our J.P. was brought up before his fellow-convivialist of the night before.

Great was the R.M.'s surprise, but he preserved his presence of mind most stoically. Having listened to the charge, he proceeded to severely admonish his friend:

'A man in your position, Mr. ——, ought surely to set a better example. It is an exceedingly painful duty for me to have to reprimand you, and I deeply regret seeing you forget yourself in a manner so unworthy of your former reputation. I cannot do less than fine you one pound.'

'Why, confound you!' retorted the infuriated J.P., 'if I hadn't seen you home last night, you'd never have sat on that bench this morning!'

An hour or so after this explosion on the part of the J.P., the two inseparables were to be seen liquoring up together in the back parlour of their favourite 'pub.'

Many a man on the west coast lost the number of his mess through drink. What a curse it is, to be sure! 'As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be!'

On looking in to see my butcher friend, one morning, he told me that he had got a 'billet' for me. It was to drive sheep up to the Mokihinui River, where the new 'rush' had set in. My 'boss' was a North of England man, and had not long been on the diggings. There being no feed or open country on this bleak, inhospitable coast, the sheep and cattle were brought round from Nelson and Picton by steamer, and sold to the butchers immediately upon arrival. My wages were to be two pounds per week, and my 'tucker;' but that was nothing out of the way at that time 'on the coast.' The 'gaffer' told me to go down to the beach, and meet the *Wallaby* steamer,

which had just come into the river. He went on board to buy.

The steamer came within easy distance of the beach, and as my master selected the sheep, so they were rushed over the side into the water, and swam ashore without mishap. Having got them together with my dog—there were fifty in all—we made a start along the sand. We got along about five or six miles, when the tide compelled us to camp, as at high tide the sands are covered, and the shingle is too heavy to travel on. We soon made a rough yard with the driftwood that was lying about; and as it was getting dark, we began to think about supper. My 'boss' told me if I walked about half a mile along the beach I should find water. So, 'billy' in hand, I started off, whilst he made a fire and 'camp' for the night.

When a fellow is tired, shingle is about the best thing I know of to try his legs and his temper.

I plodded on, thinking the half-mile was infernally Irish, when to my joy I struck *water*. It was a small lagoon, and as it appeared deep and clear, I filled the 'billy,' and 'made tracks' back for the camp. Every trouble has its end, and as I ladled out a pannikin full of tea, and sugared it

to my palate, I felt a quiet sense of contentment steal over me. An oath from my companion broke in upon my reverie.

'What's up?'

'Why, that darned tea is as salt as brine! Did ye get it out of the sea, lad?'

I would have seen all the tea in Jericho before I would have gone for any more water. So we filled our pipes, and took refuge in the blankets.

Best friend in the world! *good* old pipe! How you soothe, and console, and dispel all gloomy thoughts!

On the third day after leaving the Buller, we arrived at Mokihinui. Thirty or forty canvas 'shanties' constituted the township. The diggings were about half a mile from the shore, up in the bush. When we got up to where the claims were, my 'gaffer' pegged out a claim for himself on which to erect our butcher's shop. He had carried the calico for that purpose on his back the whole way. We built a yard for the sheep—that is, we chopped down a lot of scrub, and made what is termed a 'brush' yard—and then my 'boss' left me to cut some stakes for uprights to the shop.

I was sitting on a log, taking a spell and a

smoke, when a couple of diggers came up and suavely inquired:

'What the blazes d'ye mean, yer young cuss, by jumping our claim?'

I informed them that I was there by deputy, and that my 'gaffer' would feel hurt if I took any fighting out of his hands. After a little chaff, they invited me down to their claim, to have a drink. In reality, they had no pretensions to our ground, or wish to acquire it, but their manner of accosting me was simply their 'digger' style of humour. I like diggers. They are a fine, manly class of men, and always love to see fair play.

We spent many jolly evenings in the claims, and met men in rough flannels and dirty soil-stained moles, who could speak of curious former experiences, and tell many a thrilling tale.

As the only means we had of keeping our sheep alive was to give them such leaves and scrub as they would eat, we killed them off as rapidly as possible. In a couple of months, having had four or five more lots of sheep from the Buller, I became quite a skilled hand.

'Hind-quarter, Bill? One-and-six a pound. Fore-quarter, one-and-three. We've got a fine

lot coming up this week! What'll I send down to your camp, Jack? Half a sheep? Right you are!'

Butchering became monotonous, and a packer offered me higher wages to drive pack-horses down the south coast towards Hokitika. We travelled to Flox's River, and the Grey, and back to the Buller, calling at Charleston and Waite's Pakihis; all familiar diggings to any west-coast digger, and very rowdy diggings too. But my west-coast experiences were soon to draw to an end. I received letters from England advising my return home. Accordingly, having bidden farewell to my friend the butcher in Westport, I sailed in the *Wallaby* for Nelson, *en route* to Melbourne.

Nelson is delightful. It is quiet, old-fashioned, and English, with a climate very un-English, as it is considered one of the mildest in the world. For a colonial town, it has a very respectable air of age, and the people, including the barber who operated upon me on my arrival, seem to have vegetated there for a very considerable period.

The English church in Nelson is on a hill, and is approached by terraces of steps. The English trees around it, and the English songsters, make

16,000 miles a myth. It even made *me* reflect for some time, and as reflection never was one of my failings, I note the fact as a proof of there having been something touching about the precincts of that God's Acre. The old inn that I stopped at was just such an old inn as you may see any day in a quiet country town at home. The Trafalgar, I think it was called. For aught I know, the Trafalgar is a bustling place of business in the eyes of the good people of Nelson. I was exceedingly comfortable there, at all events.

Nelson is the very opposite to Wellington both in situation and climate. Wellington, which is only just across Cook's Straits, is a very windy and tempestuous place, where you see slates and chimney-pots flying about, members of Parliament chasing their hats through the mud, and honourable colonels and captains holding on to lamp-posts to escape the fate of Elijah. No one was ever rash enough to open an umbrella in Wellington. As a fellow-passenger of mine once remarked:

'You can always tell a Wellington man, by the way he "'olds 'is 'and to 'is 'ead to keep 'is 'at on."'

As we were leaving Nelson in the steamship

Otago, a great commotion arose in the fore-cabin. 'Lynch the ——! Run him up! Chuck him overboard!'

It was Sullivan the murderer, whom the police authorities were endeavouring to smuggle off to Dunedin Gaol. But he was too well known; and the diggers on board, having once recognised him, objected to his company.

This fiend in human shape was the most bloodthirsty of the Maungatapu gang of wholesale butchers. He turned Queen's evidence against his mates in crime, Burgess, Kelly, and Levy; but he undoubtedly was the most cruel and savage of the band. These men lay in wait at a place called the Black Rock, which is in a mountain-pass on the track leading from the west coast to Nelson. The gold escort was expected, and they agreed to murder all who came that road that day. Amongst others, a poor old whaler named Battle came trudging along with his swag. He had £3 in his pocket, earned by grubbing up flax bushes, and was making his way down to Nelson.

Burgess was sent on to speak to him, and find out what money he had. Burgess returned to his

mates, and told them that the old man had only a few pounds on him, and advised letting him go. Sullivan, however, overruled him, and insisted on 'sticking' the old fellow up. Old Battle showed fight, and drew a sheath-knife; but one of these wretches seized him from behind, whilst Sullivan kicked him in the stomach until he was dead. Other victims of that day, amongst whom was Mr. Felix Mathieu, the surveyor, were taken into the bush, a little way off the track, shot, and thrown down a gully. It is to be regretted that the diggers did not manage to lynch this monster Sullivan, when they had him on the deck of the *Otago;* but the police were too quick for them, and hustled him on shore and into a cab like lightning. Sullivan is alive and at large; but wherever he goes he will be known. He was seen on the river Darling in New South Wales not long since, but he soon cleared out on recognition. I shall never forget his face, and the fearful hunted look in his eyes, as he turned on the howling diggers, with his upraised handcuffed fists.

I have a vivid recollection of that trip over to Melbourne. A bank clerk was a passenger as far as Dunedin. He walked off with forty pounds of

mine, won at that game called Loo: a game I did *not* understand, or else he understood it considerably better. When he was going over the side he wished me good-bye, remarking that he had done pretty well, 'considering he only came on board with a £5 note.' I thought that cool. There was a savoury flavour of impudence about that man that will make me cautious of bank clerks as long as I live.

Gambling is carried on to a great extent on board steamers. The Liverpool and New York packets were much patronised at one time by a certain class of gentlemen who made a handsome living simply by travelling to and fro.

The Australian direct line of steamers has been similarly attempted by the fraternity. A very good thing can be done by 'one of the elect' in the six weeks' passage to Australia.

In the colonies there is a great deal of gambling done quietly. It is generally at some hotel where there is a quiet upstairs room consecrated to that purpose. The outside public would be surprised could they but peep into this holy of holies about two or three o'clock in the morning.

Here is the honourable member of the Upper

House sitting by the side of one of the heads of the Police Department; the leading barrister, the well-known merchant, the actor, and the fast young squatter, all hob-nobbing with Ikeys in white waistcoats and the inevitable diamond ring. Before daylight Ikey will have a good many signatures on cheques and I. O. U.'s in return for his endeavours to amuse.

Loo is generally the fancy game, but poker, euchre, and other games are occasionally indulged in. How men can be such idiots as to sit down and play with professional swindlers and card-sharpers is a mystery. The fact is, that when they *do* get hit hard, which is a moral certainty sooner or later, they would rather pay up—however glaring the fraud may be—than let the world know of their little vices. These sons of Israel, with whom they are to-night as Tom, Dick, and Harry, will not be recognised by them in the street to-morrow. There is a 'behind-the-shutters' part in the life of many men, of which the public and their wives know and suspect nothing.

I once knew a young fellow who went out to New Zealand with five thousand pounds to invest. He lived in town, and was remarkable for his

affectation in dress and other ways. He became the subject for chaff amongst his acquaintances, especially when it was known that he was in the habit of sitting down to dinner at his lodgings, when alone, in evening dress.

A noted gamester, one who had fleeced many a fool before, asked this youth to dinner with him. The gamester was a wealthy man, and his dinners at his pretty villa were in the best taste. After dinner, loo was proposed; and although the host did not appear over-anxious to play, and pleaded the greater pleasure of cigars and brandy-and-water on the veranda, he ultimately agreed, at the request of his guests.

I can well remember that snug bachelor sitting-room, with its French windows opening on to the lawn; the round table, with its silent and attentive company; the sideboard on which decanters of wine and spirits, bottles of soda and seltzer, stood temptingly to allay thirst, or lend courage to the pusillanimous.

The pigeon protested that he was a novice at the game. The others good-naturedly offered to play for 'fun,' until he became acquainted with the rules. They played until about two or three

o'clock in the morning, and, to the surprise of everybody, the 'pigeon' proved such an apt pupil that he arose the winner of £150 from his host. As he remarked, 'Beginners are often favoured by the fickle goddess.' He was asked to dinner again a few nights afterwards to give revenge. He accepted, and took away another cheque for over £200. On several subsequent occasions he was invited, and on every one was more or less fortunate.

At length the gamester became surfeited of his society. He was heard to declare that he had met with a good many 'fly customers,' but that for a 'deceiver,' the 'pigeon' capped them all. It turned out that there were very few better all-round card or billiard players travelling around, just then, than this young innocent. I fancy he must have studied 'That Heathen Chinee,' and taken the text to heart. The 'pigeon' invested his £5,000 judiciously at 8 per cent. on freehold security, and returned to England. I think he a little overpaid his travelling expenses.

CHAPTER VIII.

BOARD-SHIP ACQUAINTANCES—FORWARD CHILDREN—THE CAPTAIN—SAILORS—APPRENTICES—STEWARDS—SECOND-CLASS PASSENGERS—YOUNG MEN IN THE SALOON—MY FIRST AND ONLY LOVE!

My trip home to England, and out again, was neither particularly interesting nor exciting. We had a drunken doctor going home, who not only drank all the brandy he could get hold of, but every drop of chlorodyne in the medicine-chest. Fortunately, his services were not much needed. We had a consumptive doctor coming out, and congratulated ourselves on not having to sew him up and commit him to the deep. Nearly all ship-doctors are of this description, either on their last legs as regards health, or on no legs at all in consequence of their propensity to 'liquor up.'

We had a delightful number of colonial children

on board, when going home. Unless you took notice of these unlicked cubs, the mammas treated you in a very distant manner. Perhaps you might be seated on deck, deeply interested in one of Ouida's romances, when suddenly one of these brats would take a flying leap into your lap. He has been in the habit of jumping upon people, and mauling them about, consequently he is somewhat surprised at being quietly placed in a perpendicular position on the deck, and seriously told 'not to do that again.' The mamma perceives her darling being snubbed, and calls out:

'Come here, Johnny dear; you really must not be so tiresome: you know *some* people do not like little boys to be so forward.'

The little girls of seven or eight years of age give themselves the airs and affectations of seven or eight and twenty. They interrupt a conversation, and proffer their opinion in a way that awakes one's ire, and causes mamma to say:

'Cissy dear, you *really* must not put your word in when grown-up people are talking;' at the same time casting a look of admiration around, as much as to say, 'That child is a marvel!—and

I am sure you must all be immensely struck at her extraordinary acuteness!'

Children when kept in nurseries are frequently a nuisance; but children who have been brought up with grown-up people, and had their meals with them—as the majority of colonial children have—are beyond a nuisance.

I knew of a child in England who must have been of a naturally perverse disposition. He was, like Topsy, born wicked. One day his nurse came tearing into a sitting-room with him. His uncle was reading near the window.

'What's the matter, Jane?'

'Oh, sir! please, sir, I can't do nothing with Master Willy. He's called me a b—b—beast, sir!'

'Let me talk to him,' quoth *mon oncle*. 'Come here, Willy. Now then—you are a sensible little fellow, are you not? Do you see those cows and those sheep out in the field? Yes, of course. Well, those cows and those sheep have four legs; they are beasts. A dog or a horse is a beast. Why? Because they have four legs. Quite correct. Now, here is a shilling for you, Willy; and now run along to Jane, and tell her that you

are very sorry for being so silly as to call her a beast.'

In less than five minutes, shrieks were heard from the nursery. Down came Jane again, purple with rage.

'Oh, sir! the little villain, sir! you'd never believe what that boy is, sir! He says as how you told him that beasts had *always* four legs, and he says he *knows as I'm a beast*, and I've been a-hiding of my other legs, sir!'

The little brute had actually been looking under Jane's dress for the legs he was certain she possessed.

Amongst other characters on board ship, the captain deserves a few words. The captain of a ship is absolute monarch of all he surveys, and as a rule you will find him a very good fellow. He is a 'licensed joker,' but this is an understood thing, and as a public individual it is a part of his duty to amuse his passengers to the best of his ability. For the first month he is vastly entertaining at dinner, and although many of his anecdotes are incredible, and his jokes of a pointless nature, still you listen to them and smile. During the second month you have a repetition

of each anecdote and joke in rotation, commencing at No. 1. The third month you listen with hair on end, to a fifth and sixth repetition of his stories, and your only escape is to hint to him that you have heard them before, in such a way as to suggest no offence, as: 'Ha! ha! ha! Very good indeed, captain, and then so and so happened.' Like the clown in the circus, who throws the hoop over the ring-master's head, and cries 'Hi! diddle-diddle, the fool's in the middle,' the sea-captain has his little stock of jokes off by heart.

My belief is that they are written in a book, probably the efforts of some superannuated sea-captains, and that previous to dinner, when the captain goes into his cabin to wash his hands, he cons over enough to last all the courses, allowing two lively ones for dessert. I have known a captain read up subjects especially for conversation. This is a more sensible plan, but it is rather startling to be suddenly asked your opinion of the character of Numa Pompilius, or to hear a dissertation on religious matters supported by the highest controversial arguments.

If you are wise, you will do your best to listen

attentively, and keep good friends with the captain, be he ever such a bore. Should you be a superior 'joker,' and a better table-talker than he, you will command his respect all the more if you can only laugh at *his* jokes. To attempt to snub him, show him up in a ridiculous point of view, or otherwise make little of him, is an unwise course to pursue; for he has many little ways of retaliation, and has the power to make things quietly uncomfortable for you.

The old sea-captain who used to swear at his officers, bully his men, and make himself disagreeable to the passengers when at all put out, is now an almost obsolete character. I have travelled with such a man, and the only way to get on with him was to attack him furiously the moment he showed his teeth. Stand on your rights, and dare him to infringe your liberties as a passenger. Tell him to explode his venom on his officers, and let off his superfluous steam on his men. You will find the old sea-dog put his tail between his legs and become wonderfully fawning and polite. Fortunately, as I remarked before, this class of captain is rapidly becoming extinct; and owners are not only particular in placing

thoroughly good seamen in command of passenger-ships, but men of decent behaviour. My chief experience has been of such men, and if they are slightly tiresome in their efforts to amuse, make allowance for them, as well as for other nuisances on board ship.

Stewards are related to waiters in the same degree as the Royal Marine is to the British soldier. They are a sea-going edition of the waiter. As a class, they are civil and obliging to an extent that if anything eclipses their cousins on shore. I do not think that they are always quite as honest as they might be; but that is a failing so common in this world as to render them by no means peculiar.

Before I made a sea voyage, I had an exalted opinion of the British merchant seaman. I regret to say that my opinion is changed. The life of a sailor before the mast is the life of a dog. He is fed like a dog, spoken to like a dog, and very often has a great many other canine qualities, such as picking up bones that do not belong to him. His wages are not so much as the wages of a boy of fifteen on a station in Australia, and the only way in which I can account for crews

being obtainable, is that they chiefly consist of the riff-raff of the population of all countries. For one really respectable man who goes to sea for his livelihood, you will find ten men who are neither good sailors nor of decent character. But who, with the exception of Mr. Plimsoll, has ever tried to improve the condition of the sailor? The Church Missionary Society send Bibles and Prayer Books on board all merchant vessels. These do a *great* deal of good, especially as they are carefully locked up in a glass case in the saloon all the week, and laid out on the cuddy-table on Sunday. Generally, too, a white-chokered gentleman accompanies the ship down to Gravesend. He distributes tracts in the fore-castle, and drinks his sherry in the saloon.

To elevate the moral tone of the seaman, he must have better and cleaner berths, better food, and better pay. It is impossible to improve his condition unless his comfort is attended to on board, and an interest taken in his daily life by those in command. On shore there are sailors' homes, and the benefit derived from such institutions is immense; but the real sailors' home should be the ship in which he sails, where clean-

liness is insisted on, and the captain is regarded not only as a master, but a friend.

I can hear my friend the captain say 'Clap-trap,' as he reads this. Excuse me, sir; you are always complaining of your crews, and have not an exalted opinion of sailors in general. Try my receipt just for an experiment, and the tracts and Bibles may possibly be introduced hereafter with a better effect.

It is a matter of wonder to me that young gentlemen should ever be induced to make a second voyage as apprentices. Parents pay down a large premium. In several firms the amount is sixty pounds per voyage. These young men are in no respect better off than the ordinary seaman in the forecastle.

They certainly live apart, having a 'berth' and 'mess' of their own. On Sundays, in fine weather, they are often invited to dinner in the saloon. During the week they are employed in any way that suggests itself to the officer of the 'watch.' These young gentlemen are to be seen cleaning brass, picking over bags of potatoes—an occupation one would fancy belonged to the galley department—and making sennet, the latter amuse-

ment being on a par with picking oakum. Is it a necessary portion of a sailor's education to have to perform all sorts of dirty menial work which is the every-day labour of a lad in a reformatory? I do not think it is; and I advise all parents who are meditating on the sea as a profession for their olive-branches to send them to a good training ship to learn their business, and then to take care to enter them in a first-class Line, where ship-boys are paid to do the degrading tasks so often imposed upon the young gentlemen.

As I take my matutinal promenade around the decks, and inspect the sheep and pigs in their miserably narrow quarters, and peep into the galley, where the cook and his mates are perpetually 'hard at it,' I encounter my friend the second-class passenger. He is, like myself, smoking his pipe, and trying to kill time. He is not always the pleasantest person in the world. If he has, as is often the case, been a voyage or two, he knows a great deal too much of nautical affairs to conciliate either officers or men. Unlike the passenger who is crossing the great waters for the first time, he is callous to the

thousand and one enjoyable incidents of every-day sea-life.

'Have you seen the whale, Mr. Smith?'

'Whale!' with contempt. 'It would take an uncommonly fine whale to induce me to look over the bulwarks.'

'I wonder if we shall see any ice this passage?'

'Ice!' with still greater contempt; 'I've seen ice enough in my time. I was once three weeks in ice, off the Horn,' etc., etc.

'You will give us a song or a recitation at the coming concert, Mr. Smith, I hope?'

'Do you? I am very much obliged, but *second*-class passengers can hardly be expected to assist in saloon amusements.'

Rather discouraged, I continue my walk, and meet with another passenger, also of the second-class.

'Good-morning, Mr. Thompson; how is your wife this morning?'

'Oh, pretty middling, thanks. But it is very trying for her to be cooped up with such a lot of people as she is at present compelled to associate with. Of course, it don't matter for me; men can rough it, you know. But it is what she has

never been accustomed to. Her father, the Reverend Mr. Jenkins, was so *very* well connected —indeed, we have both very high connections. Ah, here is Mrs. Thompson.'

'Good-morning, Mrs. Thompson.'

'Oh, good-morning, Mr. Dingo. What an 'orrid morning! George,' to her husband, '*don't* Mr. Dingo remind you of the Honourable Mr. Borax, in that cap? No; I don't mean Mr. Borax—*you* know—Freddy. Lord Doodle's second son. We always called him Freddy—Oh, he *was* such a nice fellow! So *very* amusing and bright! You *do* so put me in mind of him! Oh, dear, if my poor papa could only see me now! What *would* he think! But we must just put up with it; it is not for long—though I *do* blame you, George, for ever taking our passages in the second cabin!'

The next person I greet is a nice quiet little body, who never appears on deck without her 'work.' She sits there on the 'spars' and knits day after day, until one begins to speculate whether she has taken a contract for supplying all nations with antimacassars. However, her knitting keeps her out of mischief, and she looks up with a

kindly, peaceful glance as I wish her 'good-morning.'

'I trust that you will assist us at the saloon concert, Miss Darling?'

'With pleasure, Mr. Dingo. I shall be only too happy. What a pleasant morning! and how nicely we are going along!'

Raising my cap to Miss Darling, with a slightly accelerated action of the heart, I go 'aft,' with my previously dashed spirits up to concert-pitch again.

The passengers in the second cabin are always of a very mixed description, and thus it often happens that you meet more amusing people amongst them than in the saloon. The man who goes second class, and honestly owns that he does so from motives of finance, demands respect not only from his fellows in 'limbo,' but also from the privileged 'bipeds' who walk the poop. But the affected second-class passenger, who takes every opportunity to inform you that he is so very much out of his proper position, excites no other feeling in your breast but that of compassion.

The captain of a passenger ship has, indeed, to be a cunning diplomatist to successfully humour

such a motley collection of human nature—spurred by over-feeding and idleness to give vent to all latent malice—and manage to land it without a row.

When a newspaper is started on board ship, the editor is, as a rule, to be found amongst the second-class passengers. He is most likely some clever fellow who has been on the Press at home, and is going out to the colonies, in the hope of finding that road to fame which has hitherto been hidden from him. These papers are amusing for the first few weeks, and perhaps contain sketches of no mean ability. Then they become disagreeably comical, especially to such old maids and crusty old bachelors as do not believe in funny personalities.

We had a ship editor once, who was gifted with great talent and an extra amount of perception. He never became too personal, and his paper was eagerly looked for every Saturday morning. When we arrived at Melbourne, the editor informed all the passengers that if they chose to subscribe seven shillings and sixpence each, he would have the paper printed, and forward a copy to each person's address. He obtained about one

hundred and twenty subscribers at seven shillings and sixpence, which is just thirty-seven pounds ten shillings. We beheld his form no more—and I need hardly say that his paper never turned up. I consider he took us in.

There is sometimes an 'old' young lady on board. She is well informed as regards language, music, etc., and has travelled on the Continent as a lady's companion. So she can chat about Switzerland and Germany with you, and is not altogether an undesirable companion, especially as she plays with considerable taste, and can rattle music out of the old tinpot piano in the saloon, which, at any rate, is better than nothing. She is going out to 'keep house' for her brother, who has got on 'wonderfully' in Australia. Her faults are, that she wants an awful amount of waiting on, and has a great notion that all the young men on board are poodle dogs, and that it is her particular mission to teach them how to fetch and carry. She does not pretend to beauty; in fact, she is forty-three, and getting very thin on that part of her head where some ladies adjust a 'toupet.' Still, on the strength of her musical attainments, and 'above the average on board'

talents, she requests one young fellow to carry her cushions up on the poop, another to see her chair lashed safely on the weather side; and if she should, by accident, have to find her way up the companion-ladder by herself, she pauses at the top, looks blandly up to heaven, and smiles! as much as to say:

'Is it possible that the spirit of chivalry is so entirely dead in this present generation of Englishmen as to allow a gushing damsel of *my* accomplishments to walk along the deck without an escort?'

She is not backward either in demanding one's assistance.

'Mr. Dingo, I should so like a walk. You do not mind putting your pipe aside for a few minutes. I am sure you smoke too much. Thank you. I do not feel nearly so horrid as I did just after breakfast.'

This lady is in a chronic state of feeling 'quite nice,' or so 'horrid.' Her chief occupation, when not employed in levying attendance, is in reading old letters, of which she has a thirty years' supply in a portmanteau.

Then there is the fast young gentleman who

comes out in extraordinary costumes; plays cards in the chief officer's cabin, where a considerable quantity of spirits are consumed at his expense; takes grog into the forecastle, and is on intimate terms with most of the crew. The captain regards him with suspicion, and on several occasions has to speak sharply to him, especially when half the watch is drunk one night, and circumstantial evidence points him out as the culprit.

Frequently there are one or two religious young men who belong to Religious Debating Societies. They do not play cards or smoke, or even read yellow novels. They are in the habit of taking a Bible on deck after breakfast, or into the saloon in cold and dirty weather, where they pare their nails in an attentive manner that is suggestive of extreme devotion. They are not amusing companions, being a great deal too good for the average of mankind, and imbued with a spirit of contempt for their brothers' failings that to my mind consists of 'all uncharitableness.'

And there are also the joyous, glad-hearted young fellows, starting away for their new home with light hearts, and their dearest friends' good wishes. With these one is quite at home; and

whilst you answer their many inquiries about the strange land, and tell them stories that they listen to with eager ears, you cannot but pray that God may prosper them, and keep them from those temptations that drag so many good fellows down into the hopeless mire.

During my eight months' sojourn at home, I fell desperately in love! One never experiences the sensation twice in a lifetime. It was in the London season, and we were in the habit of riding together, and meeting each other daily. She was engaged; but what did that matter? I proposed; she accepted.

She rode divinely, played and sang better than any girl I ever heard in my life (the way she sang 'The Bells they are ringing for Sarah' was something beyond description); and as for waltzing —but neither of us had any money. This was a drawback to our schemes. We did not consider it so, but it proved to be one. Were you ever in love—madly, head over heels in love? Did you kiss the withered carnations or sprigs of stephanotis that your loved one's hands had fixed in your coat the night before, and carefully lock them up in your dressing-case?

Did you ever, after a return from the opera, have supper at the house of her chaperon, and on being compelled to leave by the lateness of the hour, walk up and down on the opposite side of the street, and watch the lights which burned in the room where your darling was going to bed (in your imagination), but where really the old dowager of the mansion was being unlaced by her lady's-maid ?

If you have never experienced these sensations you are unlike most of our sex, and much to be pitied! It is a delightful dream; a disease, perhaps. But if it is so, it is a disease that resembles small-pox—you are not likely to be attacked twice with the like complaint.

My love affair terminated somewhat abruptly. I knew her one week. I was engaged. For a whole fortnight I lived in the seventh heaven. She left town very suddenly for the country, and I received a serious lecture. For seven days I was not to be consoled. I wished that I was dead. But I got over it, and so will you, dear reader.

CHAPTER IX.

THE HOT SPRINGS OF LAKE TAUPO—MY FRIENDS THE POIHIPIS—BATHING IN THE PRIMITIVE STYLE—R.I.P.

TWELVE months' sojourn in England convinced my friends that my colonial experiences had not helped to develop any business-like habits in me. I again left home with a small capital, fully persuaded that I was about to do wonders. The small capital had the same fate as a good many other small capitals have had in similar hands.

Once more I found myself in Napier, without a very heavy credit account at the bank. The Government were then forming a line of stockades through the Taupo district, in the centre of the island. Each stockade had its armed garrison, and the men were employed in making roads through the dense forests, and opening up com-

munication between Hawkes Bay and the interior. A friend of mine had taken the contract for supplying the colonial troops on the line, and at each of the stockades there were canteens erected, where rations, grog, etc., were served out at certain hours.

I agreed to take charge of one of these canteens, and accordingly took up my abode at Tapuacharuru, on the north shore of Lake Taupo. A redoubt had lately been thrown up at this spot, where the river Waikato flows out of the lake. On the opposite side of the river was a Maori Pah, built on a cliff overlooking the lake. Here dwelt the sagacious chief, Poihipi.

The Waikato River flows through Lake Taupo, just as the Rhine flows through Lake Constance. It enters the lake at a village named Tokano, at the south end, about twenty-six miles from Tapuacharuru. My canteen was built of raupo, a reed, something like the bulrush, that grows in the swamps, and is much used for building whares by the natives. Where timber is scarce, raupo is very much in request, both for walls and roof. Having erected a framework for a house, the raupo is lashed on in bundles, well dried. I have

seen many a snug hut built without a single nail—the flax which abounds everywhere being all that is required to fix the walls, thatch, etc., to perfection. A long grass called toi-toi is the best for thatch, and the reed that bears the toi-toi flag is used to ornament and line the interior of native whares. These reeds are stained different colours, and arranged in curious patterns, giving a very neat and fanciful appearance to some of the huts.

The canteen was built on the side of the lake, about two hundred yards from the redoubt. The view of the lake from this position was very fine. The mountain of Tongariro, an active volcano, with the smoke-cloud capping it, and the snow-clad Ruapehu in the background, formed a grand landscape. About a mile from the redoubt, down the river, there were a number of hot springs. We used to do a good deal of canoeing in those days, and spent many pleasant hours in paddling about the lake, or down the river, to our favourite bathing-places.

As you float lazily down this beautiful river, you pass steam-holes on either bank; and at one place, where the river narrows between two high cliffs, it has a singularly wild and weird appearance,

reminding one slightly of Dante's Inferno. My favourite bath was a warm waterfall, on the right-hand bank of the river. One could paddle from the river into this bath, which extended about fifty yards from where the water fell over the rocks. On one side of it was a smooth grassy bank, which was our 'dressing-room,' and by swimming up under the fall (which was about six feet high), and hanging on to the rocks, one could obtain a shower which defies description. Having remained in the warm water for an hour or so, the wisest plan was to take a header into the cold river. I always found this to be an excellent preventive against all enervating effects. Paddling home against the stream after the bath was a good thing to do, but I generally felt more inclined to let some of the Maori boys or girls do this part of the business for me.

There is no doubt but that, in course of time, these baths will become the resort for all people in the colonies suffering from rheumatism, skin diseases, and similar complaints.

Poihipi, the Maori chief, who dwelt on the opposite side of the river, was a most loyal old gentleman. He was of very ancient descent, and

boasted of a considerable number of followers. His village was surrounded by a palisade, and had curiously-carved entrance gates, on which were depicted marvellous hobgoblins—declared by Poihipi to be his ancestors—and which would be vastly admired in England in these days of 'high art.' Poihipi was of a portly presence—about eighteen stone—a lascivious eye, and a plausible demeanour. He frequently invited me to dinner. After the invitation he would pay me a series of visits, telling me how very busy he was making preparations for the feast. At each visit he borrowed something that he happened to be short of, such as bread, meat, grog, etc. The officer in command of the redoubt was also asked to these little re-unions, and Poihipi levied similar contributions from him. Mrs. Poihipi was a remarkably handsome woman. She had a roguish expression, and a perfect set of teeth, which glistened without the aid of 'Antiseptic Tooth Paste.' We used to spend some very pleasant evenings over at the Pah, in the hospitable whare of the Pos, as we called them, where, although we probably provided all the eatables and 'drinkables,' nothing could possibly exceed the pressing

manner in which we were coaxed to partake of them.

On one occasion, Mr. and Mrs. Poihipi fell out. I am sorry to have to mention it, but the fact is that they had both been indulging indiscreetly; and Mrs. Po was endeavouring to persuade her lord to go across the river to the Pah, and go to bed.

Now, old Po did not believe in being publicly henpecked, though it *was* rumoured that her ladyship, as a rule, wore the pantaloons. So to assert his prerogative, he pushed her down. She was about sixteen stone in weight, and I dare say felt 'shook.' She lay on her face, and Poihipi, taking a mean advantage of the opportunity, applied a paddle of a canoe, which is of a broad flat shape, to that portion of her body which lay uppermost. When out of breath he gazed around for applause; but the instant he withdrew his eye from that prostrate form, he received a butt in the stomach from her head which sent him reeling to the ground. Having returned the spanking with the paddle with compound interest, Mrs. Po took to her heels, plunged into the river, and swam across to the Pah. Old Poihipi was too staggered

to pursue, but I expect he got his 'wool combed' that evening, when he summoned up pluck to go home.

Whilst I was at Tapuacharuru, an expedition was made across the lake to recover the remains of Captain John St. George. This gallant young officer was shot at the taking of a Pah called Paurerere, just a year previously, and was buried in his blanket and waterproof-coat where he fell. We started in a whaleboat on a very hot morning, and as there was not a breath of wind, we had to pull for it. Twelve miles from the Tapuacharuru end of the lake is an island named Moto-taiko. It is a precipitous rock, of some twenty acres in extent, covered with scrub and undergrowth. The Maoris who went with us were very anxious that we should not land on it, as it is the supposed residence of the Taniwha, some imaginary monster who, in Maori opinion, is very susceptible to any trespass on his property. We had luncheon on the island, but nothing could persuade the Maoris to leave the boat. There they sat, prophesying the direst consequences of our indiscretion. Whether the Taniwha was offended I do not know, but it certainly came on to blow furiously,

and the storm could be seen travelling down the mountain-sides, howling across the lake towards us. It blew so heavily that we were unable to beat against it, so we were obliged to run into the west shore, where we beached our boat, and camped in an old Maori village. Next morning the water was as smooth as glass, so we got under weigh again, and reached Tokano.

The hot springs of Tokano are close to the Pah, and many of the whares are built so close to them, that all you have to do in the morning is to walk out with a blanket around you, and tumble into a hot bath.

Maoris act up to our royal motto of 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' better than any people I ever met. It is not unusual for both sexes to indulge in the bath together, without the slightest thought of impropriety. To our stiff English notions this sounds very shocking. I regard the custom as one of the last links of Paradise left to this sinful old world; a relic of what things used to be before our mother Eve was beguiled by that old serpent, and so caused a revolution in what must have been a very pleasant state of affairs.

Tokano has the appearance of being in close

proximity to a very 'hot place.' The crust between it and you is of the thinnest pastry. A wooden figure of a man marks the spot where a Maori actually disappeared some years ago. This made me careful when walking about. Some of the springs are bubbling, boiling geysers. Other holes are only warm; and one particular hole, into which the Maoris are fond of jumping after being in the hot water, is as cold as ice.

The spot where Captain St. George was buried was at the foot of Tongariro. From it one could look down on the Lake of Rotoairo, which is a sheet of water some four or five miles long. The undulating country and patches of pine-forest added to the wild magnificence of the scene. When we uncovered him he appeared for a few moments to be as well preserved as on the day on which he was interred. Something in the nature of the soil must have prevented decomposition. His forehead was bound up with a handkerchief, hiding the cruel spot where the bullet had struck him down. His remains were carried by the natives to Tokano, a distance of fourteen miles, and there placed in a coffin which we had fetched with us across the lake. They were sent

down to Napier, and buried with military honours. It seemed wrong, to me, that he should have been disturbed; but no doubt his relations were anxious that his remains should be laid in consecrated ground.

A year in Taupo satisfied me with Maori life. It was very jolly, but I tore myself away, not without some regrets for the society of the olive-tinted damsels who had consoled me for the absence of fairer complexions.

CHAPTER X.

MY LIVERY STABLES—THE DANCING CABBY—HANGING A MURDERER—A MODERN JONAH—AMATEUR ACTORS—I TAKE TO THE STAGE.

NAPIER was not well off for livery stables, and I determined to supply its wants. Having secured premises in a good position, and had a very large board erected over the entrance-gates, on which the public were informed that every description of vehicle was 'on hire,' I further published my intentions by a striking advertisement in the local paper, and also by sending 'cards' to everybody in the province, including his Lordship the Bishop of Waiapu and the turnkey of the Napier gaol.

I took a partner. We bought up a fair lot of horses, and speculated in a wedding-carriage lined with red velvet. As Napier had never arrived at

the hansom-cab pitch of civilization, we also invested in that convenient article of locomotion.

The road from Napier to the Spit, where the steamers come in, and the principal merchants have their offices, is over a very steep hill. So I found it a difficult matter to procure horses fit to work my hansom. I was lucky enough to get two pretty good ones at last, and the hansom caused no small sensation.

Of course the chief charm in having stables was the driving, and I astonished my friends one morning by turning out, and running as many of them as chose to get in down to the Spit, at the moderate charge of one shilling each. I took about three pounds the first day.

Whether my friends and acquaintances regarded my new line of life as a freak, I do not know; but it certainly did not affect my social position in the least. I was invited as usual to all the houses I had been in the habit of frequenting.

I made it a rule not to bow to ladies in the street unless they 'engaged' me. Then I had no help for it, and I conversed with them as if I had met them in the ordinary routine of society. I often had lady 'fares.' At parties or balls—we

used to go in heavily for assembly balls—my partners seemed to think it a capital idea.

'It must be such fun!' they would exclaim. 'I should so awfully like to drive a hansom myself.'

One day I met a steamer that had just come in from the south; and a gentleman jumped into my cab and halloed through the trap, 'To the Club.'

On his paying me my fare—I had overcharged him on account of his being a stranger—we mutually recognised each other as old friends.

'God bless me, Dingo! What on earth are you up to?' he inquired.

'Driving a cab, stoopid,' I replied. 'Half-a-crown, please.'

During the sessions of the Supreme Court, Judge —— paid Napier a visit. He sent orders to my stables for a trap of some sort to call for him every day, and take him to the court, and back to his lodgings in the evening. His Honour was disposed to be stout, and that circumstance no doubt made walking an abomination to him.

A gentleman in the Government service, Major G——, gave an evening party. '*Dancing at 9 p.m. R.S.V.P.*' I received an invitation, and accepted

it. On the day of the party the Judge sent down word to say that he would require the hansom to call at his lodgings at nine o'clock that evening. Concluding that it was for Major G——'s party, I thought I might as well drive myself, and let the men go to bed.

A long driving-coat over my evening dress, and a felt hat, completed my cabby costume; and I called at the appointed hour for his Honour and private secretary.

Having deposited my 'fares,' I drove round to the stables and put up my horse. A visit to the Major's dressing-room soon effaced any stable-reminder from my person, and in less than ten minutes' time from the Judge's arrival I was enjoying my first waltz.

The Judge was rather staggered when he recognised his cabby doing the *deux temps* with such effrontery, and when two o'clock arrived he went up to the Major and said:

'Look here, Major: I can't stand this, you know. I ordered my cab at half-past one. It is now two; and there's my cabby dancing away as if he meant to keep it up until daylight.'

This story appeared in that interesting work

the 'Wonderland of the Antipodes.' But the author got hold of the wrong end of it. As I was the principal person concerned, I have thought it fair that I should relate it.

Society in Napier, in 1866, was in a curious state of muddle. Mrs. Colonel —— arrived from England, and brought with her a lady's-maid and man-servant—man and wife. Through the Colonel's influence, the man was installed as manager of the Club. His wife took her place in 'Napier circles' as manageress, and was received into the best sets. The Colonel was at that time chief officer of the Colonial Defence Force, and it was determined to give a ball on his return, to celebrate the event.

In the first set of quadrilles, Mrs. Colonel —— danced *vis-à-vis* with her former lady's-maid. Not only did the ex-lady's-maid conduct herself with the most becoming respect and propriety, but Mrs. Colonel —— declared her to be by far the most lady-like and presentable woman in the room.

A few months later, Mrs. Colonel —— visited her husband's station. It was before the days of buggies. At any rate, buggies or vehicles of any

sort were a rarity. The journey had to be accomplished in a bullock-dray. The station bullock-driver was, like all bullock-drivers, addicted to swearing. Previous to starting, the Colonel called him aside.

'Look here, Bob; you are fearfully given to cursing. My wife is going up with you to-day, and I *will not* have any bad language. Do you understand? You can drive right enough without all that horrible swearing, can't you? Of course you can. Well, don't let me hear any complaints of that sort.'

Bob drove all right until he came to a deep shingly river. In the middle of this the bullocks stuck. He flogged, he coaxed, he poked them in the ribs, he sat down on the tail of the dray and wept. It was of no avail; not *an inch* would they budge.

At length, raising his hat with the air of a Beau Brummel, he appealed to Mrs. Colonel ——.

'If you please, marm. You'll 'scuse me, marm. The Colonel told me as how I mustn't swear. But we are *real dead beat*, no gammon about it, marm. I'm sure you ain't no cause to complain so far, marm! Now, just to lift us out of this bit

of a hole, marm, would you 'scuse my d——ing the bullocks for once, marm?'

It is a fact that without bad language bullocks *won't gee.*

Travelling circuses are common all over the Australian colonies. In New Zealand, a circus is an expensive show to travel with. Nearly all the journeys have to be accomplished by steamer, especially in the North Island, where the provinces are separated by rough and mountainous country. A circus arrived in Napier, much to the joy of the youthful portion of the population. It was a very poor affair, and only boasted of four horses, a trick-donkey, and about half a dozen acrobats. The proprietor's wife, Mrs. MacGrady, took the money at the door, played the big drum in the orchestra, and appeared in her 'daring and graceful barebacked ride,' attired in gauze petticoats slightly soiled, but short enough to satisfy the most fastidious. She was past her middle-age, and had a decided tendency to *embonpoint;* but she still retained her kittenish ways, and smiled and smirked, as she leapt through the hoops, in a way that delighted the audience. Mr. MacGrady was so short of horses that he hired some from

me. One of them, an old coach-horse named Trooper, kicked all the ring boarding down, and bolted up the street to his stable. Altogether that circus was rather fun. On the morning of its departure, I had occasion to look up Mr. MacGrady for the settlement of my bill. I found that I was not the only person that he had left unpaid. At the wharf I met the editor of one of the papers, who had a claim against the circus for printing, etc. All our arguments went for nought. Mr. MacGrady promised to remit the amounts, and suggested a variety of ways of getting off without paying.

'Now look here, MacGrady,' spoke up my friend the editor, 'we know what business you have been doing, and we know you have the cash, so we do not intend to let you treat us in this fashion. If you don't pay us our accounts, we will collar your trick-donkey.'

The donkey was on the wharf, just about to be hoisted on board. My friend made a dash for him. The man who was holding the donkey showed fight; but a dexterous left-hander from the editor soon convinced him of his folly, and we led the donkey off in triumph.

We had not gone far, when we were overtaken by Mrs. MacGrady. Producing a black bag from under her shawl, she paid us our dues, keeping up a torrent of abuse the while.

'Take yer dirty money'—it *was* dirty!—'yer pair of swindling thieves. Oh, don't I just wish I was a man for ten minutes! You're no man, MacGrady, yer white-livered, sneaking dog! I'd like to see the man who'd take *my* donkey, if *I* had yer trousers on. Yah!'

Oh, how we laughed! and with what derisive cheers from the crowd that steamer departed! The last I saw of Mrs. MacGrady, she was shaking her fist at the wharf, and screaming, at the top of her voice, at the 'dirty scoundrels' that dared to touch her donkey.

During my sojourn at Napier an old offender named Kereopa was brought to justice. He was one of the murderers of the missionary Volkner, in the Bay of Plenty, and had been at large for six or seven years. I believe Volkner was deservedly unpopular amongst the natives, but that was no reason why they should have murdered him, and treated his remains in the shocking way they did. Kereopa cut Volkner's head off, and

took it with him into the pulpit of Volkner's church, where he addressed the Maoris, urging them on to fight. He gave force to his argument by gouging the eyes out of the dead man's head, and swallowing them. Judge —— condemned this man to death, and Major G——, in his capacity of sheriff, had to find a man to hang him.

The Major had great difficulty in getting a man. However, on promise of a free pardon and twenty pounds, an inmate of the Napier gaol was prevailed upon to do the nasty job. The next thing was to find out the hangman's knot. Luckily some one knew how to tie it, so having procured a rope of the correct description, the sheriff and friends, with the hangman 'by appointment,' proceeded to practise with a bag of sand. After an hour's practice, they got so perfect that they began to take quite a professional interest in the matter.

They hung Kereopa capitally, without it being necessary for the sheriff to hang on to his legs. I saw this wretch soon after he was cut down. He looked very revolting, especially as a wound in his throat, where he had endeavoured to cut it

with a secreted razor, was torn open during the operation.

Kereopa had belonged to the celebrated Te Kooti's band. Te Kooti was one of a batch of prisoners sent by the Government to the Chatham Islands. A schooner, the *Rifleman*, visited the islands with provisions, flour, tea, sugar, etc. The Maoris surprised and overpowered their guard, took all the rifles and ammunition that they could lay their hands on, boarded the *Rifleman*, and compelled the captain to set sail for New Zealand. Curiously enough, they never hurt any of their guard. But the winds were foul, and a council was convened. It was easily accounted for. There was a Jonah on board. They knew all about Jonah and the whale, and every other story of the sort in the Old Testament. The missionaries had instructed them on all such sacred and authentic subjects. Having decided that there was a Jonah on board, the next thing to do was to set about finding him. They fixed on an old man who, in their opinion, was the very 'dead cut' of Jonah. They tied his hands and his feet, and threw him into the sea. This was actually doing more than was done in the Scrip-

tures. If a whale swallowed that old man, which of course a whale did directly he went overboard, he must have found it very inconvenient in not having the free use of his limbs when he got inside.

I never heard where he came ashore. The *Rifleman* got a fair wind, as the Maoris anticipated, and in a few days Te Kooti and his followers landed at a place not far from Poverty Bay. A few weeks later, they massacred all the out-settlers in Poverty Bay, and the war broke out again in all its fury.

Amateur theatricals had become the rage in Napier, and I gained the reputation of being 'wonderful' in light comedy, and 'very good' at burlesque. So the Napier paper said, but I do not think the editor knew much about it. To witness an amateur rehearsal is to spend a few really amusing hours. It is such a good thing to avail one's self of all the possible amusement that one can in this world, and to laugh heartily on every opportunity, that I recommend an amateur rehearsal to all dyspeptic readers.

Behold the tragic gentleman—who is perhaps an ironmonger's assistant, or a compositor on one

of the dailies—assert his authority over the nervous gentleman who plays the 'genteel comedy parts.' The nervous gentleman is in a Government Office, or perhaps a bank. In real life he is superior to the tragic gentleman; but the amateur club dispels all these little social differences, and the ironmonger's assistant, as he directs the stage business, and proffers *his* readings of the different parts, is ever so much above all Government clerks or bankers' apprentices.

'Excuse me, sir!' exclaims the tragic gentleman, as he interrupts the genteel comedy gentleman in the middle of a speech. 'Excuse me, sir, you will not mind my telling you? You know I have *seen* this done. I have seen Montgomery play this very part. When you come on, place your hand on the back of the chair—so. Now this is a very particular bit of business. Don't draw the chair back, but affect a careless attitude and demeanour. Your first words are—let me see—ah! "My dear madam, so you really thought I had decamped!" Don't say "*My* dear madam." That is where you make the mistake. Just careless like, you know—as, "Me *dear* madam." Then when she cries, "Villain, I know you for

what you are!"—*don't* be in a hurry. Draw back your chair *thus*. Look her steadily in the eyes, placing your face close to hers—compress your lips, and let the words rather escape you, than utter, "You *do?*" Not "*You* do?" as you said just now. Do you see the telling effect on the audience? "You *do?*" Only remember to do this at night, and not forget the chair business, and you may depend on a round of applause.'

The nervous gentleman then proceeds with the reading of his part. During the addresses of the tragic gentleman he has kept up a silly smile, and occasionally relieved himself by remarking, 'Yes —just so—thanks—I see.' But when he comes to those momentous words, 'You *do?*' he is agitated and says '*You* do?' Here the tragic gentleman stamps his foot, and says, 'No, no—nothing like it. Look at me—"You *do?*" D'ye see? Try that now, "You *do?*"'

The nervous gentleman tries again, and after a few attempts he manages to get it out, but *mildly*, and not with half the meaning and rascality of the tragic gentleman.

On the night of the performance, the nervous gentleman is greatly troubled about this 'You *do?*'

He repeats it both savagely and sarcastically before the looking-glass in his dressing-room—he decides on sarcasm, as having the best effect. The elevation of the eye-brows and drawing down of the lips is *very* telling. When his scene arrives, and he comes to the 'business' of the chair, and the *two words* by which he is to 'draw down the house,' he becomes very shaky. His anxiety to do it well, and hear those 'hands' in front, quite overpowers him! 'You DO?' rings through his brain! 'You DO? you DO? you DO?' But do you think he can get it out? Not he! He says 'DO you?' and succumbs.

You can tell an amateur actor in the street, especially if he aspires to 'heavy business'—he affects the air and attire of an actor. A very bad style of affectation, by-the-bye, for the actor is not, as a rule, the most distinguished-looking personage by daylight.

Our amateur club guaranteed a certain sum to a small company who were then in Auckland, and induced them to visit Napier. Amongst them was the celebrated actress, Mrs. S——, and her husband, that admirable actor, Mr. S——. This gentleman and his wife had been engaged in

England to support Mr. Walter Montgomery in Melbourne, but Mrs. S—— having met with a serious accident, they were prevented from fulfilling the whole of their engagement. The doctors ordered her to a cooler climate, and she visited New Zealand. We amateurs agreed to play all the minor characters in whatever pieces they 'put up.' In 'London Assurance' I played Charles Courtly, and the fulsome criticism in the paper on the following day decided me.

That criticism convinced me, if I doubted it before, that I was a Charles Mathews rejuvenated.

The absurdity of a man of *my* talent keeping livery stables now struck me in all its intensity—three months later I took to the stage, and appeared as Captain Hawkesley in 'Still Waters Run Deep,' at the Christchurch Theatre, in Canterbury. Oh, how I got cut up!—and I deserved it, for I played it *vilely*. But an adverse criticism was not going to deter *me*. After all, what *was* Christchurch? What did *they* know about acting? I made up my mind to go to Melbourne, and try my luck.

CHAPTER XI.

MELBOURNE—SQUATTERS—FASHIONS IN THE COLONIES—LARRIKINS—ACTORS.

To attempt a description of Melbourne would be a rash undertaking. Suffice it to say that it is, and in all probability ever will be, the Queen City of the South Seas. Burke Street presents as busy an appearance as Tottenham Court Road or Oxford Street, with very much finer buildings. Collins Street is not to be equalled by any street in London, and its shops quite put Regent Street in the shade. On a Saturday night it is well worth while to stroll up and down Burke Street, and have a peep into 'Paddy's Market' and the Arcades, just to have a look at the people.

Instead of the pale-faced Londoners, who look more livid than ever by gaslight, you see plenty of men of swarthy complexions, and even the

'larrikins,' who represent the arab portion of the population, have a healthier colour than their Old Country cousins. Looking into the windows, or rolling in a purposeless manner along the pavement, you see the bushmen who have come down to town for their biennial spree; rough-bearded looking fellows with faces tanned to the colour of old boots. The sharks are following in their wake, and unless these bushmen look out uncommonly sharp they will find themselves relieved of their rolls of 'notes' sooner than they suspect.

Loafing round the entrances of the theatres you can observe some queer customers; the hook-nosed Jew betting-man with his unmistakably 'Ikey' get up; actors out of engagement leaning against the stone pillars in a manner that convinces you they are determined not to budge an inch until somebody asks them to drink; fast young men going the pace; fast young women going to the devil; all sorts of people, of all sorts of colours, from the swarthy son of Africa to John Chinaman of yellow hue.

No matter where you go in the colonies, to New Zealand, Queensland, or South Australia, you will find that the acme of a colonial youth's

ambition is to 'take a run over' to Melbourne. In Melbourne there is a large floating population which increases or decreases according to the season of the year. At the races, in November, people flock thither from all over the colonies, and the publicans and shopkeepers rub their hands with glee. Country people, who have looked forward to their holiday visit for months, wander from shop to shop in droves, making their purchases; their trip to Melbourne will form their great theme of conversation for the next twelve months.

Certainly Melbourne is a most convenient place to spend money in. It has four theatres and a variety of other places of public amusement. It can supply you with every modern invention wherewith to kill time, from four-in-hands and hunters to lawn-tennis and skittles. Whilst a fellow has plenty of money and health there are not many places in the world in which he cannot enjoy himself; still, one's spirits are very susceptible to climatic influences, and the Australian atmosphere is so elastic and easy to breathe that impecuniosity becomes rather stimulating than otherwise.

The aristocratic portion of Melbourne society, and indeed of Australian society in general, consists of the 'squatocracy.' 'Squatter' does not sound euphonious, still it is the title of the sheep or cattle farmer. To English ears perhaps the word 'squatter' suggests a log hut in a forest clearing, or a forty-acre selection in the 'dismal swamp.' Let me inform those who associate the name of 'squatter' with such unworthy pictures, that in Australia the title conveys a very different meaning. It speaks of countless herds and flocks, thousands of square miles of country, a princely seat, and a town house. It conjures up racing studs, kennels of greyhounds, yachts, four-in-hands; in fact, all the luxuries that incomes from ten to fifty thousand a year are capable of providing.

Perhaps the squatter is an elderly gentleman, and takes an interest in the politics of his adopted country. He has a beautiful villa somewhere in the suburbs of Melbourne—Toorak for instance; the grounds are laid out with the greatest taste, the house is a model of refinement, combining the solid nature of an English gentleman's house with the cool verandas and well-ventilated rooms in-

dispensable to health and comfort in a warm climate. The splendid shrubs and plants that grow out of doors in Australia, and thrive so well, add greatly to the beauty of such suburban residences. The squatter may be seen rolling into Melbourne in his well-appointed brougham on his way to the office, or to go 'on Change,' or attend to the Legislature of the colony. He is regular in his attendance 'on Change,' where, if he does not transact a great deal of business, he receives a certain amount of homage, which he accepts as being as much his due as his yearly clips of wool.

Perhaps the squatter is a young man. He is colonial, but is Oxford or Cambridge bred. He spends a good deal of his time at the Club—he owns steeple-chasers, drives tandems, hunts regularly, and rides straight. When he marries and settles down, he will have to knock off his racers and tandems—falling back, perhaps, on a good team and a drag as his only dissipation. He will then, perhaps, enter Parliament, or commence some fresh speculative business; and when his sons grow up, let us hope that they will follow in their father's footsteps.

On a par with the 'squatter' is the great

merchant. He may probably have risen from obscurity by his own exertions. He is a little unpolished, but his sons will be gentlemen, for it does not take half a dozen generations nowadays to breed what passes off for gentlemen. At any rate, I trust that his sons will be so far gentlemen as not to ridicule the old man, on their return from college, for any of his little peculiarities.

There is a general notion in England that the Australian is an individual who wears a slouched felt hat, red shirt, breeches, and boots, and has a long shaggy beard. Well, this is certainly not unlike the cut of a stockman on a station, or a cattle-drover, but the entire population of Australia does not happen to consist of stockmen and cattle-drovers. The climate is not one in which a perpetual state of 'bell-topper'—as the tall, hideous black hat of England is called—is advisable.

If you were anxious to try what a *coup de soleil* was like, you would wear a 'bell-topper' in December or January. So there are a variety of sun-hats worn, and in the winter a 'billycock' or 'deer-stalker' is considered quite dressy enough.

Certainly at Government House levees or garden-parties, etc., the 'chimney-pot' hat may be seen. In other respects, the Australian dresses very much the same as people do at home, and his ways and habits of living are very similar to the English ones. Gloves are articles quite dispensed with by men, except for driving or evening-parties. It would be an exceedingly good thing if gloves and tall hats were also abolished in England, but unfortunately in London the filthy state of everything, from the weather downwards, makes gloves a necessity, if you wish to keep your hands clean.

Although men are remarkably plain and sensible in their costumes in the colonies, ladies happen to be exactly the reverse. The lawn at Flemington on a Cup Day is a sight not easily forgotten. All the most extravagant Paris fashions, from Worth's or Bond Street, the last arrivals by the mail, are here to be seen sweeping over the velvet turf. Trains of silk that represent a good many figures on a cheque, trail along as though they were of no more value than muslin.

At the Mayor's Ball in Melbourne, three years ago, one lady wore a dress that actually cost

twelve hundred pounds. Another lady was supposed to have on her person, including the value of her jewels, no less than five thousand pounds' worth of adornments. This is following in the wake of the New York ladies.

For my part, I think that, leaving the vulgarity and bad taste of such display out of the question, there is even a tone of social degradation in women being permitted by their husbands to bedeck themselves in imitation of celebrities of the *demi-monde*. 'Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.'

What is there in this world more charming than a simply-dressed woman? Women declare that dress is their only extravagance, and that men squander their money in a hundred other ways. This is no doubt often the case, but that deplorable fact hardly shields them from censure when they carry dress to a degree of folly.

The Melbourne shopkeeper is purely Melbourne. I have known tradesmen who have never been out of Melbourne for five-and-twenty years, and who know very little more about the colonies in general than a London shopkeeper does of the wolds of Yorkshire. They are great

patrons of the drama, and on their opinion depends, in no small degree, the success of a new 'star.'

The 'larrikin' of Melbourne is indigenous to the soil. He is the colonial street-boy, or hobbledehoy, averaging from ten to twenty years of age. At one time he threatened to become an alarming nuisance. I believe the name originated in a Melbourne Police Court, when a policeman appeared against two youths whom he accused of riotous behaviour in the streets. The magistrate inquired what the lads were doing, and the policeman—who hailed from the Emerald Isle—answered, 'They were just larrikin, yer honor.'

He meant to say 'larking,' but the name has stuck to them ever since, and has spread to others of their species in the different colonies. They became so bad at last, that it was not uncommon to see them in packs of twenty, roving about at night in search of prey. Several old people were attacked, robbed, and ill-used, and it was a dangerous thing to pass through some parts of the city and suburbs late at night.

However, the law took the matter in hand, and flogging for such offences became the order of

the day. Long sentences of imprisonment were given in addition, and the 'larrikin' of to-day is more cautious than of old, though I expect his natural ferocity is as strong as ever.

My chief desire was to make an 'appearance,' at the Theatre Royal, but it was attended with more difficulties than I had anticipated.

Obtaining an engagement in Melbourne is not such an easy matter. When I presented my letters of introduction at the 'Royal,' I found that I would have to wait a very considerable time before I could get a 'show.' Numbers of useful actors were at that time walking about the streets, out of engagement—living, as I defy anybody but actors to live, to all appearances on air.

What a curious world of their own actors live in! Take for instance the utility man, who is cast for all sorts of parts, plays in all the farces and pieces, and is in a chronic state of learning new parts. In the morning he is rehearsing. He is in his imagination the character that he rehearses. In the afternoon he is studying, or looking up his wardrobe for the night. In the evening he trudges off to the theatre, with a mysterious-looking bundle under his arm, containing his flesh tights, a wig

or two, and such other articles of costume as he requires for the performance.

So his mind is for ever in his profession, and he never ceases to be 'somebody else,' unless it is at his meals; for even in his dreams he is listening for that applause which constitutes the very wine of his life.

Actors are not regarded with a favourable eye by the Australian public. Save at the hotel or inn at which they temporarily reside, they have very few acquaintances, and the old brand of 'vagabond' is indelibly stamped upon them.

Men in the positions of our great English actors are, of course, received everywhere, but the struggling though improvident actor who has not yet climbed the ladder of fame—and probably never will—is not highly respected by the majority of his fellow-creatures.

Do I not know it? Has not the very mention of 'theatre' prevented me from obtaining the lodgings that I desired? How I hated that woman, to be sure, when, after having arranged terms, etc., I incautiously mentioned a latch-key as being an indispensable means of my obtaining an entrance after the performance.

'Oh! I was not aware that you was a play-hactor, sir. I'm sure, I'm *very* sorry—*very*. But my 'usband never *could* abide hactors; and I'm sure as 'ow he'd never consent to my letting these rooms to anyone connected with the theatre.'

And when, sick of the folly of the life, I would fain have returned, like the prodigal, to respectability, I found that there was no forgiveness, no fatted calf; nothing but stick to the swine, or starve.

But as frequently as the shady side of actors has been shown up, I have never read a word of their good qualities. Who tells of the kindly heart and generous feeling that exists in the profession?

There is the shabbily-dressed man who is engaged for general business. He is not above drinking with you as often as you like to ask him, and it never occurs to him that there is anything derogatory in drinking so frequently with one individual, and not having the means to return the compliment. His sense of what is 'nice' has been deadened on this point long ago.

That same man has, without a murmur or a grudging thought, given a whole pound out of his

salary of fifty shillings per week to a brother-actor who lies sick unto death. He is in arrears for his board and lodging, and has had to conciliate his washerwoman for the last half-dozen 'dickies' and socks, that he will owe her for until next week.

But he feels no regret for the pound that he has subscribed, or the few shillings that he spent in fruit and flowers, for his sick brother.

O brotherly love! You indeed cover a multitude of sins! That vain and foolish fellow lives only for admiration, and is weak in a thousand other ways; but his heart, when appealed to by a brother in distress, swells with a great sympathy that is almost unknown, save in that strange region from whence there is so seldom a return —Bohemia.

CHAPTER XII.

PAWNSHOPS—MY ADVERTISEMENT IN THE 'ARGUS'—GET A BILLET AT LAST—WARDEN IN A LUNATIC ASYLUM—'BUS-STABLES—GROOM TO A DOCTOR.

It is possible to get rid of your money as speedily in Melbourne as in London or Paris, if you go the right way to work. The youth who delights in the Café, and hangs about the saloons of the theatres and the billiard-rooms, will soon find out that there are plenty of willing souls who are not above helping him to spend his superfluous cash.

How many young fellows I have met, who, wearied with the long sea voyage—and perhaps animated with the novelty of being their own masters—have rushed into reckless dissipation by way of commencing their colonial career.

In a few months you meet the youth who was

so gay on board, so careless of the future and happy in the present, buttoned up close to the throat to hide the loss of the familiar watch-chain, perchance to conceal the soiled condition of his linen. His face, that formerly was so open and frank in expression, has, in a few brief months, become careworn and anxious, and there is a furtive glance in his eye that speaks of a distrust in his own species, which is new-born of his own bitter experiences.

He has this morning pawned the very ring his mother gave him as a parting gift, and though he jingles the coin in his pocket, and recklessly invites you in 'to have a drink,' he feels a gnawing pain at his heart that eats his soul away, despite his carelessness of demeanour. His watch and chain went long ago, together with the greater portion of his wearing apparel; and when the little money that he now fingers so eagerly is spent, his prospects will indeed be of a blank description. When he landed he had good letters of introduction, and was kindly received at the houses at which he presented them; but, as he informs you, 'he got on the loose, and had not been near old Thingumbob for nearly two months, and now he

had got so infernally hard up and shabby that he dare not look him up.'

The first time that he thought of raising money on his personal property he had a thousand scruples about entering that Mont de Piété. How he walked up and down Elizabeth Street, and looked at the shop on the other side! How he nursed the brown-paper parcel which contained the things he wished to pledge, and which he had taken such pains to do up neatly, in case anyone should guess what he was about to do! And at last he gained courage enough to cross the road, and even look in at the window with affected ease. But he was frightened lest some acquaintance should notice him, and with a hurried glance around he walked away to the nearest hotel, where he imbibed enough dark brandy to cause the barmaid to fancy he was troubled with the colic. He felt better after the brandy.

'Hang it,' he argued to himself, 'plenty of fellows have done it before. It is quite legitimate to raise money on one's own property, if one is hard up.'

And then he plucked up courage to sneak in at the side door, and dive into one of the little

pigeon-holes, where customers are carefully screened from each other's impertinent observation. The pawnbroker knew that it was his first visit, for he could tell so well by the hurried manner and nervous answers of the applicant. So the pawnbroker was most particularly soothing and polite, for he smelt several trunks full of good clothes and things, which he knew would soon be in his possession. Alas! the pawnbroker was right in his surmises. After a few visits, the young sinner was emboldened, and the deeper he sank the more brazen he became.

I knew a gentleman in Melbourne who had arrived at the very lowest rung of the ladder of respectability, but always managed to keep his head above water. He had been an officer in the army; and I fancy he owed his misfortunes solely to his propensity for frittering money away. He did not drink to excess, and possessed no glaring vices; but getting through money is a disease very often hereditary, and almost impossible to cure. I think this man had tried nearly every way of getting an honest living, excepting by manual labour. He had been commission-agent, actor, canvasser for every description of article,

from the last patented hair-oil to the two-pound-fifteen suit of tweed, as manufactured by the Monster Clothing Company. He was reporter for a 'daily' when I met him, and received thirty shillings per week for his labour. The suburban Police Courts were his particular business; whenever you met him, he was most lively and pleasant, light-hearted and full of chat, as if no misfortunes could induce him to regard life otherwise than as *couleur de rose*. He was so hard up that he could not afford to get his boots soled. The uppers were pretty good, but he had to resort to pieces of sardine tins, artfully fitted in the soles, to keep the soil out. At the same time he spent a few shillings in the course of the week in liquor; but as he could not afford brandy and soda—his favourite beverage—he indulged in rum and ginger-beer, which, as he explained, was very much the same thing if you drank it off *sharp*, and was only about half the price.

One of the most devoted patrons of the pawnshop that I ever met was a man in Sydney. He was a man who in prosperity was recklessly extravagant. Even a sudden windfall of a few hundred pounds would cause him to invest in

every description of expensive luxuries, from a gold watch to buckskin breeches. When adversity approached, and cash became with him a daily scarcer commodity, these articles belonging to the golden epoch disappeared one by one; until their owner, by a gradual process of transformation, once more assumed his normal state of shabbiness.

On one occasion when his account at the bank was in an unusually rosy condition, he had occasion to visit a dentist, in order to replace some of his front teeth. Any ordinary mortal would of course have been satisfied with one set. He invested in three. He remarked that they were sure to come in handy some time or other. So they did, for he handed them over to the pawnbroker in less than six months, for an advance on the gold settings. I frequently met this man, and always knew the state of his finances by his teeth, or by their absence. If he was extremely pushed for ready cash, 'uncle' took care of his grinders. Did he happen to make a few pounds, he straightway redeemed them, and as he smilingly showed his 'ivories,' there was not the slightest fear of his attempting to borrow half a crown. In a

state of bare gums he most certainly would have done so. He was one of the few men I have met in this world whom I much preferred 'to show his teeth.'

Two or three months in Melbourne had the effect of bringing me to a state of financial low water; and as I dreaded ever arriving at the 'buttoned-up-to-the-throat' condition that I have described, I began to look for some employment. I studied the advertisement-sheet of the *Argus*, and applied for several situations. Unfortunately for me, most people required testimonials. Up country such things are not required. In Melbourne they are.

One morning I walked down to the *Argus* office, and inserted the following advertisement:

'Wanted, a situation as coachman. Age 25. Apply, Alfred, *Argus* Office.'

I got plenty of answers. One was from the manager of the Bank of Victoria. I called there, and was shown into the managerial sanctum. I felt that sort of sensation that I should imagine a man to feel when applying for an over-draft and

being dubious about getting it. Personally I never had the impudence to apply for such an accommodation.

I was very nearly getting this situation, but Mr. —— did not discharge his coachman, after all. I expect the man had been misbehaving, and was forgiven. My 'get-up' was very correct, and I had taken the precaution to try the effect of it at Kirk's Bazaar, where I inquired for work; so I am sure Mr. —— did not 'smell a rat.'

Another answer I received was from a merchant in Flinders Street. He wanted a man to groom, milk cows, knock about the house, and do a variety of jobs. I did not 'cotton to' this gentleman, so I said I would call again.

Amongst other invitations I received, was one from Mr. Harcourt, of Cremorne. I called, and although he objected slightly to my want of 'character,' he promised to let me know during the afternoon whether he would engage me. I saw this gentleman again, and he told me that he intended 'to keep his coachman on,' but that he had another situation, of a different nature, to offer me.

When he mentioned it, I confess that I felt

rather staggered. It was the post of warder in his private lunatic asylum. Now, this was a line of business so novel and far away from my ambition, that I do not think I should have felt more astonished if he had suggested the feasibility of my 'standing' for the enviable position of member for East Melbourne. After a momentary hesitation I accepted his terms, and promised to be at his house that evening.

When I walked across the Fitzroy Gardens that night, with a small bundle of clothes under my arm, to enter upon my new vocation, my sensations were not of the pleasantest.

Considerable misgivings possessed me as I rang the bell at the big outer gates of the establishment, and, to tell the truth, I had a good mind to back out of the agreement. Presently I heard a stump, stump, stump, coming across the paved yard, and the wicket in the large double doors was opened. I beheld an old man with a wooden leg, who, having satisfied himself that I was the party he expected, let me in, and proceeded to lock and bolt the little door. When I heard old Cerberus drawing to those bolts, I felt inclined to give him five shillings to let me out again. We

walked across the yard to a building, at the door of which the old man knocked. It was unlocked from the inside, and I was ushered into a large room with a bare boarded floor, and a long table in the centre, at which twelve or fifteen men were seated. Some of them were playing draughts, others were looking over old copies of the *Illustrated London News*. Two or three were sitting apart doing nothing. The young man who opened the door was my mate, and we speedily got into conversation.

The room in which I found myself had two other doors besides the one by which I had entered. One large door opened into the gardens, where the patients had daily exercise. The other door was at the far end of the apartment, and opened the way down a passage, on either side of which were the bedrooms.

At nine o'clock my mate asked me to step across the yard to the kitchen, and fetch in some basins of gruel. Those patients who were under treatment for 'dipsomania,' as we will politely term their complaint, were ordered this evening meal. Some of them had a certain allowance of brandy added to their gruel, but those who had so

far recovered as to be able to do without it had none.

At ten o'clock the signal was given for bed, and the patients filed off to their several rooms. Two or three generally occupied the same room. Only a few of them required any assistance in dressing or undressing. One young fellow slept by himself in a refractory cell. He was occasionally very violent, and was a more fit subject for the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum than an Inebriate Retreat. From the formation of his skull I classed him with a vicious species of the monkey tribe, 'gone wrong.' We had to undress this individual and take his clothes away, leaving him only his blankets and a straw mattress. He was in the habit of tearing up about half a dozen straw mattresses weekly. To have given him a flock mattress would have been an act of reckless extravagance. He took an unpleasant fancy to me. Whenever he saw me he came up and patted me on the shoulder, chuckling to himself all the while. As he had the disagreeable knack of flying into sudden passions, and using his teeth without giving one warning, I objected very much to his caresses. When my mate spoke to him

and told him to go away and sit down, he obeyed; but he invariably followed me about with his eyes, and laughed with a maniacal glee that made my flesh creep.

Our own bedroom was in the passage where the majority of the patients slept. I cannot say that I slept calmly and quietly on that first night. Next to our room was the bath-room, and as it was very hot weather we both indulged in a 'shower' prior to going to bed. As I lay awake and listened to my companion's regular breathing, the drip, drip of the shower-bath, which I suppose had not been quite turned off, and the thousand and one noises that assail the ear of a restless wooer of the sleepy god, I wished myself back again in my comfortable lodgings. I began to speculate on the possibility of one of these irresponsible people amongst whom I had cast my lot creeping into our room, and stealthily drawing a razor across one of our throats. And then I composed a paragraph in my brain for the 'daily' next morning, headed 'Shocking Murder by a Lunatic!'

Morning came at last, and I hailed it with delight. The patients had their baths, and the

convalescent ones appeared to enjoy the luxury very much. I believe the shower-bath to be the greatest institution ever invented for people suffering from brain diseases. As three-fourths of the world suffer from such affections, I think it would be a safe thing to recommend the 'shower' to the general public. In very latent insanity it will have the beneficial effect of retarding the progress and development of the disease.

I will describe the dietary scale. Breakfast consisted of plain bread and butter, and slices of cold meat, with a plentiful supply of weak tea. Dinner was plain and good, there being soup, meat, and vegetables. Tea was a repetition of breakfast. Some of the patients were restricted by the doctor's order to a certain quantity of meat; otherwise they had plenty of good food.

Between meals the patients were 'let out' for promenade in the gardens, whence we had to accompany them, in case of any attempt at escape, or the possibility of one of them being suddenly 'took worse.'

Cremorne, the name of this establishment, is on the banks of the Yarra River; and the suburb of Richmond, in which it is situated, is one of the

pleasantest retreats for those who can afford the luxury of a villa near town.

The grounds do not run quite down to the river, but from the garden fence you can see the boats as they are pulled up or down by their light-hearted freights. The grounds of Cremorne present a melancholy contrast to its present inmates. Mr. George Coppin, the well-known lessee and caterer for public amusements, laid out these gardens as a theatrical speculation, which I have heard was not a successful one. It was a miniature reproduction of the Cremorne with which some Londoners are familiar.

When I paid my visit to it, the old theatre was standing, with its ticket-offices, grand entrances, and ornamental façades, just as it stood in gayer times. There were the summer-houses and trellis-covered walks, where the young Lothario from behind the Burke Street counter whispered his tale of love into many willing ears. And there was the Rotunda, where the brass band played, and around which thousands of pleasure-seekers had danced. Even the old frameworks on which the fireworks were wont to be fixed were there; and the isolated billiard-saloon, with its mouldy

tables and fusty atmosphere. All these skeletons of dissipation had a tale to tell. They seemed to say, 'Don't suppose that we have long been in this wretched condition. This was not *always* the abode of melancholy, my friend. We have seen some very pleasant times, and were once very smart indeed. Ah! if we were only to tell you one half of our naughty experiences, how shocked you would be—ha! ha!'

The patients in Cremorne were well treated and accommodated, and I think that the system pursued there with a view to their gradual recovery was a good one. I do not altogether believe in the mixing up of patients in these establishments. For instance, when a man is recovering from the effects of drink he is in a highly nervous and irritable condition, and requires repose and such quiet amusements as can best divert his mind. Suddenly a fresh patient is admitted who goes into a series of fits, and howls like a mad dog. This must surely have a detrimental effect on the convalescent inmates. Nervousness is the certain effect of over-indulgence in drink, and I have seen men seized with an epileptic fit simply from witnessing another in the agony.

I once met with a horrible sight at Cremorne. A man was admitted who had been drinking heavily. He had a succession of fits, and for twenty-four hours was in a very precarious state. He was bled copiously near the temples, and had the usual remedies applied. I never heard whether he got over it.

At the end of one week I bade adieu to Cremorne. I could not stand it. I think that if I had remained there a month I should have required 'looking after' myself. Reader, may you never be compelled to enter the portals of a similar establishment!

For several months after my Cremorne experience I gained a living as 'strapper' at the Brunswick 'bus-stables—where I earned thirty shillings per week. The work was hard, and the hours long, but it was a treat after a week in a madhouse.

One morning I saw an advertisement for a groom, application to be made to a doctor in Carlton, which is a continuation of Melbourne. I applied, and was engaged without much trouble. The doctor had a large practice, and a great many Lodges to attend to. It is notorious amongst

grooms that a doctor's place is no sinecure. My master was exceedingly pleasant and affable, but that does not go far towards recouping one for the loss of rest that one has to put up with.

It is annoying when a fellow has 'turned in,' after a long day of driving around every part of Melbourne—with a hot wind blowing—to be called up at two a.m., and ordered to put the gray mare in the old night-buggy. You are apt to swear internally as you holloa out 'All right, sir,' and get out of bed in such a hurry that you knock over the inverted gin-case at the side of your bed, on which, in lieu of a table, you have deposited your stable-lantern, matches, pipe, and a yellow novel. Of course you cannot find your socks, and try vigorously to pull a left boot on your right foot. Then, after putting the wrong collar on the mare, and not finding it out until you have buckled the harness, you are just putting her in the trap when out comes the doctor.

In he jumps, and away you go as fast as the old 'screw' can put legs to the ground. Most doctors' horses are 'screwed' all to pieces. Then you have to wait for an hour or so at the house of the sick person; and if you do not go to sleep

you begin to speculate on what the interior of that house is like, and from its exterior and position, so you people it to please your imagination. At last the doctor comes out, and tells you to drive home. Perhaps it is nearly daylight by this time, and you hardly consider it worth while to go to bed again. I do not wonder at doctors having frequently to change grooms. I saw an advertisement in the *Argus* once for a coachman's situation. It wound up with 'No doctor need apply.—Joe.'

Whilst I was driving about Melbourne in livery I often saw people whom I knew, but who never recognised me. When I obtained leave to 'go out of an evening,' I used to go down to my lodgings, where I had left all my luggage, and assume the appearance of a gentleman for a few brief hours. My landlord enjoyed the transformation very much, and quite appreciated the joke. I nearly ran up against my master one night in the vestibule of the theatre. My hands did not look quite the thing, certainly, as harness blacking is hard stuff to remove from the skin in one ablution. Gloves are voted caddish in Melbourne ever since H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh walked about with his royal paws uncovered.

I am of his Royal Highness's opinion, and I like to see a man with a brown hand that looks as if it could give a good pull on the 'main sheet,' or hit out straight on emergency. Those white-handed filbert-nailed gentlemen always remind me of 'What's the next article, sir?'

I saw a good deal that amused and interested me in my servant's life, but I will reserve my impressions on the subject until later on.

I left the doctor on excellent terms, in consequence of my being offered a situation of a very different nature.

CHAPTER XIII.

SYDNEY—I MAKE AN APPEARANCE AT LAST—TRAVELLING CADS.

In the theatrical profession it sometimes happens that man and wife are separated by their engagements. This occurred in the case of Mr. and Mrs. S——.

The husband remained in New Zealand to open a new theatre, whilst his wife was engaged in Melbourne to support the English 'star' actor, Mr. Fairclough.

After the conclusion of Mrs. S——'s Melbourne engagement she required an agent, and engaged me, at a salary that amply repaid me for serving one of the most amiable and talented of women. My New Zealand friendship with Mr. and Mrs. S—— thus proved of an advantage to my histrionic ambition. I made one appearance in Melbourne,

when I sustained the part of Mr. Turtle in the farce of 'Catching a Turtle,' on the occasion of Mrs. S——'s benefit. Playing on a stage of the vast extent of the Melbourne stage is quite a different thing to playing on one of the New Zealand stages; but I believe I got through my difficulties very fairly on this occasion.

The first engagement that I made for my fair client was with Mr. John Bennett, of the Victoria Theatre, Sydney.

We sailed for Sydney in the *Dandenong* steamer. She was one of six colonial steamers that I have travelled in which are now at the bottom of the sea. A great many steamers are wrecked on the New Zealand coast, which is a very dangerous one, both on account of the rough coast-line and the stormy latitude of the islands.

Does Sydney require description? I would willingly believe not; but I am reliably informed that there are people in Great Britain, even amongst the 'well-educated' classes, whose geographical studies have been so grossly neglected that they hardly know anything about it, save, perhaps, that it is the site of an old penal settle-

ment somewhere in a remote country marked on the map as New Holland.

For a fact, I have seen cases on the wharf in Adelaide, addressed 'Adelaide, New South Wales, South Australia.' People in England do not seem to be able to understand the vastness of the colonies and the great distance between the large cities. For size, England would just cut up into two very decent sheep-runs, each requiring a manager and three or four overseers to work it.

To steam up Sydney harbour on a bright summer's morning is a beautiful sight. Having passed those rugged sandstone cliffs, outside of which the unfortunate *Dunbar* was wrecked some years ago, we beheld a splendid panorama. Lovely inlets and bays, with picturesque bits of rock and reddish cliffs, trees and scrub, with here and there some pretty seaside cottage peeping through the foliage. I never believed that oysters grew on trees until I saw them. I have many a time knocked them off the mangroves in the Paramatta River. Dotted about the harbour are rocky islands; and on one, Pinchgut Island, there is an imposing-looking fort. The most important batteries are on the land, and I believe that since

Sir William Jervois took the fortifications in hand, Sydney is nearly impregnable.

Sydney is a very hilly city, and from the wharf where our steamer lay it presented a very English appearance, with its churches and spires standing out conspicuously on its heights. The streets leading from the wharfs are very steep and badly paved. I thought it an uncommonly good pull up for a horse with two people, and a few portmanteaus, in a hansom. Of course, I looked on the horse from a professional point of view.

Everything in Sydney strikes you as being slow and old-fashioned after Melbourne: delightfully uncolonial, even the leading papers, in which sermons and religious announcements are conspicuous, and information regarding amusements, races, or coursing only to be found on a very back page indeed.

The landlord of one hotel at which I stopped was a very great politician. He had been in parliament some years previously. Not a very great recommendation, by-the-bye, in the colonies. There are some terrible blackguards in these colonial parliaments. But I dare say the same thing might now be said of older countries with-

out 'perverting the truth.' It is not an unusual thing in a colonial parliament for one honourable gentleman to get up and anathematize the 'eyes' of another equally honourable gentleman. Even blows are occasionally exchanged, and honourable members are 'bonneted' on the honourable floor of the upper house.

Notwithstanding the immense respect that I felt for my landlord's parliamentary career, I objected to his reclining on the sofa in the sitting-room that I hired from him for my own private use; and even went so far as to declare his house to be dirty, his drains out of order, and his person offensive to me.

We parted company, and I obtained better quarters. Sydney is very badly off for hotels. They are expensive, and third-rate at best. It would be a good speculation to start a really first-class hotel in Sydney.

The Botanical Gardens are a just source of conceit on the part of the Sydney people. I cannot imagine anything more like our childish conceptions of fairyland than the lawn of those gardens on a balmy spring morning. The bright green English grass, the sea-washed terrace wall,

from which you might almost fling a pebble on board one of the moored men-of-war; the splendid shrubs and semi-tropical trees, gigantic Norfolk Island pines, bamboos over one hundred feet in height, Queensland chestnuts, and Moreton Bay figs, palms, dates, and fern trees, all nodding to you in the soft South Sea air, all seeming to say, 'Oh, how amazingly well we thrive here! We have none of those wretched climatic inconveniences to contend against that our sisters in the southern colonies complain so bitterly of!' The walks and drives around that favourite old rock of mine, 'Lady Macquarie's Chair;' the well-arranged free baths, where the sharks are fenced out, and the dusty citizen can disport himself in the limpid wave, free of cost and danger—all combine to make Sydney pleasant and enjoyable.

There are few places in the world where you can get better boating than in Sydney. The native or colonial born youth of Sydney are great at aquatics. The fact of its having given birth to a 'Tricket' is a proof of the competition in such affairs. But without going into boat-racing, only engage a nice centre-board boat at Wooloomoo-

loo—which is a marine suburb of Sydney—and sail down to the Heads, or up the Paramatta River. Land in a well-shaded bay; stroll up and look at the orange-groves; picnic on fresh oysters and bottled porter. Sublime!

The private houses of the richer classes, especially those in the neighbourhood of Double Bay, are well worthy of inspection. There are so many of them, and they all vie so with each other in the charms of their surroundings, that it would be hard to choose, were you—which is not likely—offered the 'pick' of them.

I have known of one, from the lawn of which you can obtain such an exquisite view of water and headlands, through a vista of the rarest shrubs and flowers, that Claude Melnotte alone could do justice to it in language. Beneath the lawn are terraces, stretching for a few hundred yards to the sparkling sea beneath; the air is not only laden with the perfume of flowers, but also of the sweet-scented lemon and orange-trees; and amidst the branches, revelling in their sports, are the bright-plumaged paroquets and rosellas that are so familiar to the Australian eye.

As I gaze upon the scene I think, 'Yes! it is

all very fine to say, "Thou shalt not covet," but I *do* covet.'

The city of Sydney is irregularly built. Even in George Street, which is regarded as the fashionable thoroughfare, the pavements are in places only wide enough for two or three people to walk abreast. The streets are so crooked that it is impossible to see very far in any direction. But the buildings are costly and in good taste.

Melbourne is laid out with mathematical precision, and is a more convenient town in every way; but Sydney strikes one as being by far more homely and comfortable. The present generation are not to blame for the way in which the city is built. Property is far too valuable there now to allow of any material reformation; and the air of solidity and hospitality that pervades its population fully compensates one for any of its civic failings.

In an architectural point of view, I consider that Sydney eclipses Melbourne. The buildings in Melbourne are immense, and many of them in a half-finished condition.

The Government House in Melbourne, which

is finished, was evidently copied from a design for a lunatic asylum. The Government house in Sydney is a handsome, castellated mansion, and is surrounded with well laid-out grounds. It is built on a promontory in the harbour, and adorns one of the most lovely landscapes in the world. The Town Hall, the Cathedral, and the Post Office in Sydney are all fine buildings; and many of the merchants offices in Pitt Street are of good design and of great cost. To scrutinize the buildings in the city, however, causes a stiff neck, so narrow are the streets, so lofty many of the warehouses.

Our Sydney engagement was a success, and we had a three months' undisturbed 'season of joy;' that is to say, we applied regularly at the 'treasury' every Monday morning, and received full salaries. I was engaged to play 'walking gentleman;' and I made my first appearance in the drama of 'Plot and Passion,' as the Marquis de Cevennes.

I felt rather nervous and anxious on my first night. The 'company' were all strangers to me, and their criticism is far keener, as a rule, than that of the audience. In one scene De Cevennes

is commanded by Fouché, the head of the police, to sit down and write a full account of his journey to Paris, omitting *nothing*. Poor De Cevennes is puzzled to remember what he had for luncheon on a particular day. When I came to this part, one of 'the gods' yelled out, 'Well, what was it, boss? 'Am and weal cutlets?'

To the ambitious amateur, such remarks are as wet blankets. Still, a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind; and if I had been in the gallery and beheld a youthful genius of about my stamp trying to make himself funny, I have no doubt but that I might have made just as rude an observation.

One of the papers criticised my performance thus: 'In spite of some awkwardness in walk, a disagreeable twiddling of thumbs, and a shrill voice, Mr. Dingo gave the Dundrearyfied exquisite of the period, the Marquis de Cevennes, with very fair animation.'

I could have forgiven all but the word *shrill*. That *was* unkind. It brings to mind 'Tom Thumb' singing a 'Life on the Ocean Wave,' on a table in St. James's Hall; or a Punch and Judy show, with a high tenor showman.

The Sydney theatre-going public are fond of the 'thrilling drama.' Such pieces as 'East Lynne' or 'Black Sheep,' in which there is some cold-blooded villain, take immensely. For a benefit once we played a piece called 'Ambition; or, The Throne, the Tomb, and the Scaffold.' It was written by Dumas, and contained a series of the most improbable and unauthenticated events that were ever fathered on English history. Catherine Howard was the heroine. However, the audience liked it, and the house was crammed. Nothing 'draws' so well in Sydney as a tale of '*Be-lud!*'

On the termination of our Sydney engagement I made terms for Mrs. S—— to appear in Brisbane.

On board the steamer there was a young cub who got a thorough good snubbing. A Queensland squatter was returning from Brisbane, having lately taken unto himself a wife. His wife was accompanied by her mamma and a very pretty sister. Prior to our leaving the Sydney wharf, a servant, who had been busy carrying portmanteaus on board, deposited on the poop a rather elaborate chair.

Do not run away with the idea that it was an ordinary shut-up arrangement, such as common people are in the habit of using on deck. It was a regular billiard-room lounge-chair with a cane bottom, and flat arms whereon you might have had your glass of hot grog, your novel and your elbows all at the same time, without any danger of upsetting your grog or rendering yourself in anyway uncomfortable. The chair was admired—no one found fault with the chair; but what we questioned was the good taste that prompted the owner to have carved in large letters on its back, 'The Honourable John Fitz Foodle.' The owner of this baronial seat was a fat-cheeked pumpkin-headed boy of about nineteen. He had on a light overcoat and a Balmoral cap. A cigar was stuck in his Cupid mouth, and an eyeglass in his left eye. The latter ornament had the effect of somewhat halving the vacant expression of his face.

He was accompanied by a gentlemanly sort of man some years his senior, but this did not prevent the interesting youth from staring rudely at the ladies on the poop, or blowing the smoke of his regalia in their faces. He belonged in his

own opinion to such a very superior grade of society to any he beheld on board, that he did not consider it necessary to exercise any of the common rules of politeness.

I was talking to my Queensland friend when a mutual acquaintance came up and said:

'Do you see that young whelp sitting on the skylight, Colin? He has had his eyeglass fixed on your wife and sister for a quarter of an hour at least.'

We walked aft and observed his cubship. He was sitting to windward of the ladies, puffing away at his cigar, and eyeing them in a manner so grossly impertinent, yet so absurdly ridiculous, that it was difficult to tell whether one felt amused or angry.

As we were watching him, his friend walked up. Colin, totally ignoring the presence of the Honourable John, addressed his friend:

'Are you in charge of this young *gentleman*, whom I presume to be the Honourable John Fitz Foodle? Oh! travelling with him. Well, as you have the appearance of a gentleman, a quality this youth appears to be deficient in, would you kindly intimate to him that if he continues to stare at

those young ladies as he has been doing, or blow his filthy tobacco-smoke in their faces, that I shall in all probability so far forget myself as to box his ears ?'

The Honourable Mr. Fitz Foodle turned very red, and would most likely have been insolent; but Colin looked so very much as if he meant what he said, that the ingenuous youth bottled up his wrath.

For the remainder of the passage he kept chiefly in his cabin, where he talked to his friend in a loud tone about a prince who had once been his father's guest.

We were playing whist in the saloon one evening, and heard as usual the 'Prince' being discussed. Colin could not stand it. In the midst of a dead silence he broke out:

'Yes; all that young brute knows about the Prince is that he used to "prig" an extra quantity of almonds and raisins after dessert when H.R.H. dined there.'

Whilst I am on the subject of youthful abominations of this sort, I may as well relate another incident that came under my personal notice.

A son of a great English Government official

was doing the grand tour, and paid a visit to a sheep-station in Australia. We will call him Mr. Yahoo. He was received with all the civility and hospitality for which Australians—especially bush Australians—are so noted. There were several other guests, and the time for bed arrived. The manager, Mr. White, who was likewise host, showed Mr. Yahoo to his own bed-chamber. On such occasions the host generally takes a blanket and 'camps down' before the fire. There were two beds in this apartment, and shortly afterwards Mr. White ushered another gentleman in. Mr. Yahoo looked aghast!

'Aw! you are not going to put another fellah in here, are you? Aw well! 'spose it can't be helped. Hope you don't snore. By-the-bye, White, have you got any beaw?'

'Any what?' said the manager.

'Any beaw?'

'Oh, *beer*. Yes, I'll get you some beer;' and in a few minutes Mr. White returned with glasses and two bottles of 'beaw.' He drew the corks and placed them by his bedside.

'Good-night, Mr. Yahoo.'

'Oh, aren't you going to have some beaw?

'Pon my soul—too bad—wouldn't have troubled you—haw!'

At breakfast next morning, Mr. Yahoo, having finished his repast, proceeded to cut up tobacco over the table-cloth. White eyed him savagely, and when the other guests had finished, remarked:

'If you have all done breakfast, gentlemen, perhaps you would like a smoke in the veranda.'

Yahoo looked placidly around and smiled:

'Aw! that's *very* good! Now, do you really call this a breakfast, White?'

I wonder White did not show him what he really called a door.

I do not think that any lad would forget himself in this way if he had been through one of our great English public schools. Both of these young gentlemen were the results of private tutors and home indulgence. They came out under the impression that they were doing the colonies great honour—and failed to make any other impression on the colonials beyond that they themselves were insufferable snobs.

Let me inform such youths that there are gentlemen in the colonies as well as in England,

colonially born gentlemen, too, whose pedigrees do not stretch back as far as the Conqueror, but whose education and good-breeding make one blush for the well-born cad who, sad to relate, too often hails from the old country.

CHAPTER XIV.

BRISBANE—QUEENSLAND IN GENERAL—BLACKBIRD CATCHING.

THE city of Brisbane is built on a projection in the Brisbane River, about thirty or forty miles from Moreton Bay.

Moreton Bay is very shallow, to all appearances, but the entrance to the river is well marked out by buoys. The long 'reaches' in the river make the city appear considerably further from the sea than it is in a 'crow'-line. Large vessels go right up the river to Brisbane, and steamers fly between Brisbane and Ipswich, which is fifty miles by water further still. The city is a flourishing one with good buildings, and first-rate hotels and shops. Most of the private houses partake of the 'bungalow' style of architecture. This includes large verandas, green venetians, 'lazy'-chairs,

and mosquito-blinds to all the French windows. Fragrant with stephanotis, lemon and orange blossom, and luxuriant in all tropical growths, are the gardens in which such houses stand.

In the neighbourhood of Brisbane you can see the pineapple growing in perfection. If ever I gave the subject a thought, I was under the impression that pineapples grew on some sort of tree or tall plant like an aloe. Now I know that they grow in rows, like potatoes, on a low prickly bush not more than three or four feet high. I drove out to a farm and bought four dozen pine-apples one day to send to a friend in Sydney. I paid threepence each for them, and had the privilege of picking out the finest and cutting them myself. The farmer told me that snakes are very fond of pineapples, and that numbers are killed in the paddocks where they grow. I expect the real reason is the shelter that the rows of bushes afford them, for notwithstanding the respectable appearance of that farmer, I must say I think a snake would consider twice before he took a bite out of a pineapple.

Bananas, tamarinds, guavas, passion fruit, and all such tropical productions grow in nearly every

garden. Sugar is already a great article of export, but the difficulty that the planter has to contend against is the labour. South Sea islanders were brought into the colony to supply the want, and answered very well, but the 'trade,' as it was called, had its abuses. Speculative traders commenced kidnapping the unfortunates. This was all very well so long as the 'kidnapped' ones agreed under hatches. One vessel with a full cargo, picked up at different islands, had a terrible tragedy enacted on board.

There were over three hundred of these wretches packed in a very small hold. Some of them came from islands that were at deadly feud with the others. The consequence was an outbreak. The white men on board knew that, if once the 'blackbirds' burst the hatches, although they were unarmed, they would soon master the ship. So having failed to pacify them by fair means, the crew proceeded to fire down at them through the gratings, and even bored holes with augers in the bulk-heads, through which they kept up a continual fire *until all was quiet.*

I think it took about three hours to bring about the desired effect. When the hatches were re-

moved the sight was horrible! Dead and dying, and the few unhurt but scared creatures, were all huddled together. The hold literally swam in blood. The worst part of the affair was the throwing of the wounded ones overboard as they were brought up yet alive from below.

When this vessel put in at one of the islands in the Pacific she was boarded by an officer of a man-of-war. The worst of the men implicated did the usual thing on such occasions. He turned Queen's evidence, and quoted Scripture. I do not think it would be a wise thing for that man to show his face in Melbourne. Two of the other leaders in the affair received a sentence of 'seven years' each.

Since this dreadful business a number of cutters, carrying one gun each, with crews drafted from men-of-war, have been employed in the Polynesian Archipelago in repressing the 'blackbird trade.'

Polynesians are still brought to Queensland, but by legal means. They are engaged for three years, and at the end of that time can return to their own homes. This is an excellent way of civilizing these islanders, and promoting a friendly intercourse with them. The Queensland planter

has no other choice at present but to employ these islanders, or allow the country to be overrun by the Heathen Chinee. He has already had quite enough of the latter gentlemen. Northern Queensland already swarms with them. They are hard bargains, scraping together all they can get, and taking it away with them back to China. They will not even leave their bones behind to enrich the soil. These are sent back to China in every case in which the deceased has left sufficient behind him for passage-money. The Government of Queensland have lately put a poll-tax of ten pounds on every Chinaman coming into the colony. This may possibly deter some of them.

Brisbane is decidedly warm, but the hot winds do not prevail there as in the southern colonies. In the hot weather people get away to the Darling Downs, where most of the rich city residents have country houses.

Europeans seem to thrive wonderfully well in Queensland. In the far north there is ague and fever, but for these the sufferer frequently has to blame his own carelessness or intemperate habits.

Insect life of course abounds, and flies are a

particular nuisance. Cockroaches attain a prodigious size, and tarantulas, scorpions, and centipedes are frequent inmates of your bed-chamber.

A great many consumptive people are sent from all parts of the colonies to Lower Queensland. I have known several cases in which patients who seemed very far gone have recovered. Of course the colony includes nearly every variety of climate, extending as it does over so many degrees of latitude. The air on the Darling Downs is most bracing, but the atmosphere of Rockhampton or Cooktown verges on the unbearable.

On the Darling Downs, wheat, oats, and other cereals are grown. In the valleys immediately beneath the Downs, sugar, tobacco, etc., flourish luxuriantly. Sheep, cattle, and horses increase in a manner unknown in Europe. All Nature is wonderfully prolific, from the alligator twenty feet in length to the universal flea.

At the termination of our Brisbane engagement we thought that it would be pleasant to return to Sydney overland. Accordingly we arranged an entertainment, and invited Mr. W. G. Carey, the well-known Australian actor, to join us. It being

necessary that we should have an agent in advance to make arrangements about halls, hotels, etc., we engaged a very remarkable old man. When I first made his acquaintance, he was painting a scene on the stage, and was smothered in 'priming.' That same evening I saw him play Duncan, King of Scotland, in 'Macbeth.' In the farce he was an aged parent. I was told that as a clown he was in his element; but he was quite at home in any business, from heavy tragedy to lighting the lamps. This old man was a nephew of a late Lord Chancellor, and had been educated for an architect. He had four initials to his name, and a royal Duke for a godfather. If his godfather could only have seen him as I saw him! The agreement we made with this 'old party' was that on our part we would pay him a fair wage, and that on his part he should not get drunk. This stipulation was quite necessary, as between you and me, dear reader, he *did* get drunk sometimes. Well, we all have our failings, but to have a drunken advance-guard would have given such a bad tone to the entertainment.

We decided to 'open' at Ipswich. Although

the distance from Brisbane to Ipswich is fifty miles by river, it is only half that distance by coach. The trip by the river, however, is the pleasantest of the two, and we knew that we had plenty of coaching in store for us by-and-bye.

CHAPTER XV.

OVERLAND FROM BRISBANE TO NEWCASTLE—OUR ENTERTAINMENT—A WOOL-BALE THEATRE—A REAL 'COUNT' KEEPING A 'PUB'—TICHBORNIAN LIARS—NEWCASTLE, N. S. WALES.

THE river steamers on the Brisbane River are propelled by huge wheels at their stern. They are roomy and comfortably fitted for the trade, having large saloons and a well-awninged deck. To sit under an awning, on deck, beneath a tropical sun, catching every puff of the cool air that comes daily up from the sea; complacently to regard your white linen clothes, and anathematize any stray smuts that settle thereon; to watch the smoke curl away from your cigarette into the bright sunshine; to make believe you are reading that uncut volume, but really to have your thoughts more often on the bottled beer which is cooling in wet towels beneath the

awning; to carry on a dilatory conversation with an intelligent but equally lazy lady friend—these are some of the pleasant sensations that I call to mind in connection with an Ipswich steamer. That I should note all such feelings of contented indolence may not be considered praiseworthy; but when I cease to appreciate a bright sunshine, and can no longer meditate with half-closed eyes on the inscrutability of everything in general, and nothing in particular, then, dear reader, I shall know that all real enjoyment of the Beautiful is for me a thing of the past, and that I am dying of the most horrible complaint in this world —Ennui!

Our entertainment was prepared and rehearsed prior to our departure from Brisbane. We had selected the little comedy of 'Delicate Ground,' scenes from 'The Honeymoon,' 'The Hunchback,' 'Macbeth,' and 'Leah.' Our theatrical wardrobe was of necessity a limited one; as we knew that when coaching we should not be permitted to carry much luggage. Mr. W. G. Carey and I so arranged matters that a 'tunic' with 'trunks,' blue 'tights,' and a curly wig was one costume, while the same tunic, with yellow tights,

no trunks, and a long-haired 'Richard II.' wig, was another gentleman altogether. Tights and wigs do not take up much room; but to have taken correct dresses for each character would have necessitated a quantity of luggage.

On our arrival at Ipswich we were received by our agent in advance, the remarkable old gentleman with the four initials. He had secured apartments for us, and placarded the town with large posters. The School of Arts was engaged for the performance for three successive nights. He had forgotten nothing; from the band at £2 per night, to the 'bell-ringer' who shouted out our arrival at the small charge of five shillings. In most Australian up-country towns there is a 'bell-ringer' who announces all sales and amusements in the street. It is after an old English custom which has nearly died out, and he invariably commences in the old style of 'Oh yes! Oh yes!' and winds up with 'God save the Queen!'

I had to talk to that 'bell-ringer.' He would insist on shouting out that Mrs. S—— was to appear in her great and unrivalled character of 'Queen Ophelia' in Hamlet. I explained to him that it was 'the Queen' and 'Ophelia'; then,

after a pause, 'Mr. W. G. Carey as Hamlet.' He made a worse mess of it than ever. I heard him on our way to the School of Arts, yelling out, 'To-night, to-night! Roll up, and see the great tragedian, Mrs. S——, appear in her hunrivalled performance of Queen Anna Felia; and (after a pause) Mr. Carey as 'Amlet.'

Ipswich contained about 6,000 inhabitants in 1873, and was a well-to-do little town. I think that there has since been a line of rail connecting it with Brisbane. At that time it was the terminus of the Warwick and Dalby lines. It is a very hot place in the summer-time, hotter I believe than Brisbane, which is quite hot enough.

Our three nights at Ipswich did not prove very profitable. I do not think we 'took' more than twenty pounds. We began to wish that we had brought a dog-and-monkey show, instead of 'Hamlet' and 'Macbeth.'

Unluckily for us, there were two circuses on ahead, and also the Lottie Troupe of Gymnasts. The consequences were, that when we arrived at a small town, we found all the inhabitants surfeited with gaiety, and only the out-and-out lovers of dissipation could be enticed to patronize us.

Besides, our entertainment was so mild an affair after the excitement of the trapeze, and the hair-breadth escapes of the muscular Miss Lottie. Nothing takes so well up-country as a 'circus,' gymnasts, or a nigger troupe. I quite sympathize with the popular taste. One can always laugh at the clown's old jokes, and admire the skilful manner in which the Signora *Z*amora jumps through the hoops.

Then the clever way in which she simulates a blush when the clown compliments her too broadly on the symmetry of her ankles! But it would require a considerable amount of persuasion to coax me to sit out an entertainment consisting of scenes from celebrated plays. Not that I mean to disparage our entertainment—far from it. It was too good for the public taste, and if we had only introduced a 'Sailor's Hornpipe,' or such songs as 'Walking in the *Z*oo,' we should have drawn larger houses, and given greater satisfaction.

For instance, the scenes from 'Hamlet' and 'Macbeth,' though acted in a manner that had been most favourably criticised throughout the colonies, went flat. But when I appeared as

Alphonse in 'Delicate Ground,' with a vacant gaze, and a red tip to my nose—which was quite incorrect—the audience were delighted. Then in our 'Honeymoon' scenes, when the Duke Aranza kept on filling my glass—I was the peasant Lopez —and I repeated, 'Oh, no more, thank you!' at the same time holding out my glass, they were in roars. The fact is, that it is very easy to make people laugh, and the more they laugh the better they are satisfied.

Seventy-five miles from Ipswich, by rail, is the town of Toowoomba. The line of railway winds up the mountain-ranges to the Darling Downs. The view from the zigzag line affords a splendid prospect of the champaign country, two thousand feet beneath. Looking out of the carriage window makes you consider the possibility of the engine breaking down, or a carriage becoming detached, and you speculate upon the velocity with which you would arrive at the bottom, and the inevitable 'smash-up' when you got there.

The gums and big trees far below in the gullies look like so many cabbage-tops, and although the scene is grand, you cannot help feeling satisfied at reaching your destination in safety. Too-

woomba is a thriving town in the centre of an important district, and the handsome villas around are chiefly the summer quarters of the Brisbane citizens. The change in the climate from Ipswich is very striking, and although the sun is powerful, one feels as if one could breathe more freely than in the lowlands below. There is generally a good deal of business being transacted in Toowoomba, and large mobs of horses, sheep, and cattle are disposed of weekly, by auction, and drafted to all parts of the colonies.

It was in the bar of the comfortable hotel where I lodged that I was introduced to a man whose address and conversation at once interested me. In these parts, it is considered the correct thing to follow up an introduction in the following manner:

'Glad to know you—what will you have to drink?'

After a few minutes have elapsed, the man to whom you are introduced is expected to remark:

'Here, landlord, fill these glasses up again.'

Of course we did not depart from the usual

mode of procedure, and my new acquaintance rapidly became communicative. He was an unfrocked priest, and 'What will you have to drink?' had been his curse. It fell out that I knew his family at home, but I discreetly avoided any mention of the fact.

Poor fellow! One of many thousands in Australia! How many there are, men of college education and good belongings, who, expatriated for their sins, drag out the remainder of their miserable existences in lands where they have long since ceased to hope! The only escape from the sense of moral degradation that possesses them is Death! They know this—oh, how bitterly—and know, too, that such news will be received 'at home' probably without a tear, most likely with even feelings of relief on the part of their relatives.

From Toowoomba we visited Dalby, a go-ahead township fifty miles distant. A great deal of the country we passed through, *en route*, was under cultivation. A good supply of wheat is grown on the Downs, but not sufficient for the consumption of the colony. At Dalby we were fortunate enough to get ahead of the 'Lottie Troupe

of Gymnasts.' So we had the pleasure of having those 'eminent artistes' as part of our audience.

We invited the fair 'Lottie' to supper at McCormack's hotel, and she was so kind as to show us the muscles of her arms. Through constant trapeze work, and other gymnastic exercises, her muscles had become as fully developed as a blacksmith's. I think she could crack a nut between the fore part of her arm and her biceps.

McCormack's hotel brings to my memory a facetious waiter named James. He apparently existed in a chronic state of alcoholic hilarity, which seemed to assist, rather than otherwise, his marvellous domestic abilities.

Jondaryan Station was our next place of halt. This is a little railway station, with an extremely small beer-shop attached. The sheep-station, one mile and a half distant, is a large one. Jondaryan is twenty-nine miles from Dalby. It being shearing time when we visited it, there were a great many 'hands' employed, and the overseer sent a trap over to convey us to the wool-shed. We had visited the station in the day-time, and so knew that there would be no conveniences for dressing.

Accordingly we went over in our evening-dress clothes, taking with us a few pounds of composite candles.

Having induced some of the men to sweep the floor and stack up a few wood-bales one on the other to represent a proscenium, we set about lighting the shed. Four pounds of candles fixed in their own deposit on the beams, and a row on the floor for footlights, did this effectually.

Our not being able to make a change of dress proved awkward, especially as I had to perform two characters in one piece. It was hardly possible to walk on and say, 'I am the Count Montalban,' and five minutes afterwards inform the audience that I was somebody else. Puzzled what to do, I took an intermediate course. When I went on as the Count I was in evening dress; and when it came to my turn to represent the peasant Lopez, I took off my coat, ruffled my hair, and acted the clown of 'that' period. Whether the audience took the hint, and understood that I was no longer the Count, or thought I was still the Count disguised in liquor, I cannot say. I expect they accepted the latter interpretation. They must have been equally mystified as

to where Lady Macbeth ended, and where Leah commenced. Having no music—not even that vilest of instruments, a concertina—it was impossible to have any distinguishable interludes. Certainly one might have said, 'This is the end of "Delicate Ground;"' but that would have sounded uncommonly like 'Here endeth the first lesson.'

At the conclusion of the performance, which, I must say, the audience bore very meekly, we had the satisfaction of receiving a cheque from the manager, and three cheers from the shearers. They were both appreciated, especially the cheque. I think those shearers were at any rate as much amused as we were.

The Duke of Edinburgh mentions Jondaryan in his book. He is supposed to have remarked upon arrival: 'What came we forth for to see?'

The country is particularly flat and uninteresting, and the only signs of habitation are the stationmaster's house and the little beer-shop already mentioned. Therefore I regard that observation of H.R.H. as particularly appropriate. In a time of little 'goaks,' it would have been immortalised as a *bon mot.*

I regret very much that our visit to this lively

spot did not occur at the same time as that of H.R.H. What a delightful treat it would have been for those shearers! What a decorating of that wool-shed with wattle boughs! I do believe that we could have even arranged a royal box out of wool-bales. Anyhow, H.R.H. should have had the tallest and softest seat in the shed.

From Jondaryan we went by rail to Warwick, which is distant seventy-nine miles, and is not far from the borders of New South Wales. For a description of Warwick, look up Mr. Anthony Trollope's book on Australia. In fact, for all descriptions you cannot do better. To attempt to describe the places already described by the author of 'Barchester Towers' would be an act of superfluity.

I will content myself by stating that Warwick is a prettily-situated town on the river Condamine. The buildings are good, the town well laid out, the river a capital one to bathe in, and the hotels snug resting-places.

Every other man you meet in Warwick asks you if you do not think it a very clean place. It certainly cleaned us out pretty well with the 'bad houses' we had.

At Warwick the Queensland line of railway terminated. It reflected great credit on Queensland that in 1873 they should be able to boast of so many miles of rail. The Dalby line extends now to Roma, which is two hundred and fifty miles from Brisbane.

From Warwick we took coach to Stanthorpe, a tin-mining township, forty miles distant, very nearly on the New South Wales border. Tin-mining is very like alluvial gold-digging. The sand is washed in the 'cradles' in the same manner, and the 'races' and 'sluices' would make an old digger fancy himself quite at home. The weight of a bucket of tin half washed is over a hundred and fifty pounds. I was rather surprised on being asked to lift 'a bucket,' as it appeared to be only full of sand.

The road from Warwick to Stanthorpe is the roughest I ever travelled 'on wheels.' It had been raining lately, and our Jehu left the old tracks to seek fresher and drier ones. The track he took led us through the timbered ranges. I was on the roof of the coach, which happened to be pretty well crowded. Under the overhanging boughs of the eternal eucalypti, 'Look out for

your heads, boys!' shaving the butts of trees, and coupling our congratulations from narrow escapes with commendations on the skill of the driver. Down a steep hill, and squash into the swamp at the bottom.

'Here's a go! Sorry to have to ask you gents to lend a hand. Hey! *get up* there, you cow! You call yourself a 'orse? Uugh! yer swine! Get up there! Hey, boys! Lash! lash! lash!'

All hands at the off-side wheels! Mud up to your knees! Now she moves! lash them up, driver! Hooray! and away we go again. A broken bar or two, that are hastily repaired with a bit of fencing-wire, carried for such emergencies, are all the casualties; and once on the hard ground again, the driver warms his team up into a gallop, the coach rocking to and fro, like a ship at sea.

From Stanthorpe we visited all the principal tin mines. We went to 'Wilson's Downfall,' where we played in a skittle alley to about forty people; and the 'Sugar Loaf,' where we were fortunate enough to have a stage—a billiard-table. At the latter place, we found a free and unbiased opinion of our performance chalked up on the wall next morning. It was only five words.

'*A Beast of a Play.*' That critic understood précis!

Tenterfield is a very pretty village in New South Wales, and is thirty-seven miles from Stanthorpe.

After roughing it at Stanthorpe, and at the tin mines, we appreciated the green paddocks, the river Sovereign, and the good quarters at the inn.

From Tenterfield we coached on to Vegetable Creek, another mining place, forty miles further on; and thence to Glen Innes, thirty miles more.

The landlord of the hotel at which we stopped in Glen Innes was a remarkable character. He took me aside in the bar-parlour in the course of the evening, and after a preliminary canter—by which I mean a few expressive Hems! and Ha's!—asked me if I had any suspicion as to his identity. I replied most truthfully, 'Not the least in the world.'

'Then,' continued he, 'relying on your integrity as a man of honour and a——'

'Oh, certainly! of course, my dear fellow.'

'Relying on all that sort of thing, and with the

presentiment strong upon me that we shall meet again under very different auspices——'

'Most decidedly! Yes. *What* were you going to say?'

Placing his lips close to my ear, he said in a stage whisper:

'I am the Count de la Rothe!' (*Chord of surprise in the orchestra.*)

N.B. The music was of my own imagining!

'Are—you—really!' (*Slow music.*)

'I am!' (*Chord.*) *Then to slow 'Corsican Brother' twitterings*—'For reasons too long to explain, let me briefly tell you that my family were strong adherents of the Bourbon dynasty. I left France at an early age' (he had a strong Irish accent). 'My fortunes led me to these colonies; and, after a variety of ups and downs, I am that which you now behold me—a licensed victualler.'

'How very interesting!' I remarked.

'Our old family Château of La Rothe is situated on the coast of Normandy.'

'How nice!'

'The ancient archives are yet in my possession.'

'Come—that's satisfactory.

'And when the case is settled by the peers of France, before whom I have brought it, I have no doubt but that I shall once more enter upon those dormant titles and confiscated estates which——'

'Of course,' I interrupted; 'I perceive at a glance. If it wanted confirmation, the nobility of your address, the gentility with which you drew that beer to-night—the indefinable air of "what d'ye call it" with which you snubbed that bush-man in the bar, all—all convince me of your long descent.'

Clasping my hand in his, he wept.

This was not the only point on which he was crazed. He was slightly insane regarding his wife. She was not lovely, neither was she of a seductive nature. She wore her yellow hair down to her waist, and her jealous lord eyed all visitors with a glance that combined suspicion with 'bowie-knives for two.'

When I wished the countess good-bye, I never even squeezed her hand.

Ever since the great Tichborne trial, there has been a mania on the increase in Australia, which takes the form of making the unfortunate

victim believe that he is a nobleman in difficulties, or at the least an expatriated scion of a lordly house. I have met dozens of such men, who no doubt have seen 'better days,' but who on the strength of not dropping their *h's*, and the vestige of a once respectable appearance, mysteriously let you into the secret of their blue blood.

A tall, big 'lump' of a fellow applied to me once for work. I was store-keeping on a station, and the manager was away. There was not a great deal of work going on just then, but I told him that he could stop at the men's hut for the night, and I would see what I could do for him in the morning. There were some contractors splitting posts in a gum creek near the station, and I got him work with them. He was one of those men who, when you ask them what they can do, reply, 'Anything.' You generally find this to signify, 'Nothing.' This man was of the irrepressible description. He insisted on conversation. He told me that he had been an officer in the 2nd Life Guards. Now I could not stand that, so I asked him his name. He said that the name he 'went by' was Valentine; but he hinted at being several cuts above a commoner.

I happened to have an 'Army List' of the very year in which he said he belonged to the regiment. So without letting him know this, I asked him whether he knew such an officer, sometimes suggesting a fictitious name. I found out very quickly that he knew nothing about the army at all, much less about the 2nd Life Guards.

We had a little blacksmith on the station, who had been a farrier in the 11th Hussars. It took very little to excite Jimmy's military ardour; and when I told him that the big post-splitter was a Life Guardsman, he was in a state of frenzy until he had put him through his sword-exercise. The Guardsman knew so little about it, however, that he speedily got a crack on the skull, which made him wish he had left the 2nd Life Guards alone. This man was a lazy beggar, as well as a liar. He could not use an axe a bit, so he soon gave up splitting posts.

Just before I left Australia I was in an hotel, and the conversation turned on my approaching departure. An old gentleman with a long white beard came up to me, and inquired what part of the 'old country' I came from.

After some extraordinary remarks on his part,

he informed me that he was shortly going to England to claim large estates in ——shire. He said that he was really Sir Henry H——. I never heard of such a man, and one does not always carry 'Debrett' in one's pocket. He then 'shouted' champagne, and assumed the most pompous airs. He was another victim of the Tichborne mania; but I have met many such people completely 'cracked' on the same subject. It is very easy to tell when a man is lying in these cases. The fact is, that if a man really was under a cloud, he would be the last to let the world know of his disgrace.

Not long since a poor fellow died in Melbourne who had been a letter-carrier for years. He was of a very noble family, but he hid his misfortunes from the world's cold gaze, until death published what he had so long concealed.

Glen Innes is in the centre of a large 'squatting' district. The races are very celebrated in Australia, the Glen Innes 'Cup' being of the value of £1,000.

Armidale is sixty miles from Glen Innes, and is the chief town in the district of New England. The climate is very delightful in this part of New

South Wales. English fruit trees and flowers thrive here amazingly well, and the town is of great importance, boasting of two bishops and a corporation. I do not think that our entertainment was much patronized, but I put that down to the two bishops. However, I remember the place as being the prettiest on the road between Brisbane and Newcastle.

Our next place of call was Tamworth, which is seventy miles from Armidale. We left by the night coach, and though I could not see the road, I felt that it was execrable. The road led past Bendemeer, where a duel with a bushranger took place a few years ago. The hotel was 'stuck up' by two men, who were well informed of the absence of the only trooper there. They helped themselves to the till, and frightened the landlady nearly out of her wits. Having helped themselves also pretty freely in the bar, they became uproarious, when the trooper, a young man named Bowen, unexpectedly put in an appearance. One of the bushrangers ran upstairs, and turned into a bed with his boots on, but the other ran out to meet Bowen. The trooper had just tied his horse up to a post, when the bushranger fired at

him. The rest of the performance was a duel at ten yards. Bowen fired three or four times, and his antagonist fired about the same number of shots. Bowen won—killing his man. He then went upstairs and unearthed the other ruffian.

From Bendemeer the coach travels over good roads and through a very picturesque country, until it arrives at the sudden descent of the Moonbie mountain. Here the road takes a zig-zag course down about fifteen hundred feet into the valley of Tamworth. The view from the top of the mountain is very fine. Tamworth is now the terminus of the Northern line in New South Wales. In 1873 it had only reached Murrurundi, which is sixty miles off. Tamworth is a rising town, and there is a great deal of splendid land in its neighbourhood under crop.

At Murrurundi we met our *avant courier*, the nice old gentleman with the four initials. I regret to say that he was not quite sober. We did not require him any longer, so it did not much matter, and I think he had kept pretty right during the journey. From Murrurundi we took train to Newcastle, as we were tired of our entertainment, and were in a hurry to get back to

Sydney. Murrurundi is only a small place in the mountains. It is very pretty, being shut in by high ranges and having plenty of big timber about it. It is one hundred and twenty miles from Newcastle.

A great quantity of coal is obtained at Newcastle, and shipped all over the colonies. It is of an excellent quality, and is used by nearly all the steamers, manufactories, etc., in Australia.

The town of Newcastle is not unlike many other seaport towns, and there is nothing particularly striking in it unless you happen to land there on a hot-wind day. The dust naturally partakes of a coaly nature, and when powdered freely on a perspiring face, disguises the individual so effectually as to render it a problem whether his own mother would recognise him.

There is an immense quantity of shipping always in Newcastle, and the steamer traffic is very large. Landing from a Sydney boat at six o'clock a.m., and leaving by the first north train, or leaving the Port at ten p.m. for Sydney, does not give the passing traveller much time to look around the town. I remained there a whole day

on one occasion, but passed through it many times. The distance from Sydney to Newcastle is about eighty miles, and the steamers that run between the ports are capitally provided.

CHAPTER XVI.

CLIMATES OF THE COLONIES—TASMANIA—LAUNCESTON—CONVICTS—HOBART TOWN.

In the great continent of Australia there is of course nearly every description of climate, from the temperate to the torrid zone. Although Victoria is the most southern of the colonies, and therefore the one in which you would expect less heat, I can most certainly avow that I have suffered more from hot winds there than either in South Australia or New South Wales. To be sure, it was in Victoria that I first became acquainted with a hot wind, and the 'new chum' probably feels the inconvenience more than an old inhabitant. I am case-hardened enough now to rather enjoy a hot-wind day. It is an excuse for nice iced drinks and an extra shower-bath, when in town; and up in the bush it is sur-

prising how little notice one takes of the weather personally. It is regarded solely as having a good or bad effect upon the grass and feed. Hot winds are pronounced by Australian doctors to be the best of febrifuges. If it were not for them, Melbourne would be far from a healthy place to live in. They sweep over the back slums and dirty lanes of that great city, expelling smells and infection in every alley.

I have known hot winds to last for nine days in Melbourne. They then became a nuisance. I think that three days at one time should be quite sufficient for them to do all they have to do, as whilst they last there is not the slightest mistake about their being in earnest.

Adelaide has its hot winds, so has Sydney its 'brick-fielders,' but they are becoming rarer there year by year. The farther one travels north, the less you are troubled with these siroccos; and in Queensland they are comparatively unknown.

It would be hard to decide which is the best climate out of the seven colonies. New Zealand is bracing, but rather too tempestuous to one who has resided in Australia. It is very delightful in the summer months; so is Tasmania. New South

Wales, Victoria, and South Australia vary only in the degrees of pleasant, pleasanter, pleasantest; placing your favourite in the superlative. Queensland in the south is on a par with New South Wales; in the north it is tropical.

Tasmania is the great resort for Australians in the hot weather. Thither they flock from all parts, and the little island becomes quite a bustling place of importance. It is so conveniently close to Victoria (Launceston is only eighteen hours' steam from Melbourne), that people think no more of running over for a month's holiday, than Londoners do of going to Herne Bay or Ramsgate.

Launceston is the most northern city of Tasmania, and is prettily situated on the river Tamar. The scenery in the neighbourhood of the town is grand, and there are some extremely picturesque rocks and waterfalls which well repay a visit with the sketch-book. The inhabitants of Tasmania struck me as being about the slowest-going people I ever came in contact with. There is a delicious freedom from all hurry and excitement in all their proceedings, that is the very reverse of anything one ever witnessed in the

sister colonies. When I visited Launceston in 1874, the town did not give me the impression of being in a flourishing condition. To judge by the wharves which were rotting to pices, and the grass that grew in some of the principal thoroughfares—not to mention numbers of empty houses with broken panes of glass—the place was well on the road to bankruptcy. This, too, was at the time of year when one would imagine trade to be most brisk, on account of the influx of Australian visitors; so what the state of things must be when times are dull is better imagined than described.

The Tasmanians, however, do not forget to make as much as possible out of their visitors during the summer. Like all seaside places, everything 'goes up' a hundred per cent. directly the season commences. The manners and customs of the islanders are at least thirty or forty years behind their generation, and the traditions of the good old times when the imperial troops garrisoned the island, for the ignoble purpose of guarding convicts, form the basis of its history. Many of the inhabitants can proudly refer to their ancestors as having had the honour of being under military surveillance.

As there is no emigration to Tasmania, and no one in his senses would think of settling there with a view of making money, and also as all the young men who are good for anything emigrate to one of the neighbouring colonies, I am afraid that the next generation will become a byword.

A more beautiful island in point of scenery, or a pleasanter spot for a change of air in the hot summer, could not perhaps be found in the whole world. But the people have never got over the old convict system. It seems to have tainted the whole community.

In the beginning of 1874 the railway through the island was only in course of construction. There were opposition coaches running from Launceston to Hobart Town, which is one hundred and twenty miles. So great was the opposition, that many serious accidents occurred through racing; and people preferred in many cases going round to Hobart Town by steamer, rather than run the risk of getting their necks broken.

I thought it a better way to hire a trap in Launceston, and take it easily through the country,

stopping at such places as seemed most inviting. One peculiarity I noticed in my tour was the absence of young men, and the superabundance of nice-looking young women. The Tasmanian girls can boast of complexions the like of which are not to be seen in the other colonies, and are scarcely to be rivalled in the old country. In number there are apparently about ten women to one man, and that man is generally an old one.

I intended, on leaving Launceston, to stop the first night at a place called Snake Bank, which is twenty-seven miles on the Hobart Town road. By accident I overshot the mark, and arrived at a public-house in a thickly-timbered country, which reminded me much of the 'Roadside Inn' in the tragedy of that name. My horse was not the gayest animal that ever had collar and winkers on, neither did he seem inclined to prosecute the journey any farther that evening. So, although the exterior of that inn did not suggest the most luxurious fare, I determined to stop there for the night. In the course of the evening I inveigled the bullet-headed proprietor of the establishment into conversation. As a new-comer to the

colony, it was only natural that I should be curious to hear as much as possible about the convict system of the early days. Boniface told me some horrible tales. No more than I readily believed, for I have met with plenty of men who were eye-witnesses to the cruelties of those days. It was a common thing for men to be tied to trees and flogged, perhaps for giving a surly look or committing some slight offence. The magnificent road through the island of Tasmania was made by gangs of these poor wretches, urged on to their labour with the lash under the burning sun, whilst sentries kept guard over them with loaded muskets. Some of these unfortunates were in perpetual chains, with the irons wearing into their flesh as they worked, but yet they dared not rest. Their food was hominy, a sort of pasty gruel (since, fashionable in England!); and when night came, they were locked up in droves until morning brought a renewal of their miseries.

I happened to remark to Boniface that there must be a great number of convicts or their progeny settled in various parts of the island.

'You had better believe it,' quoth he. 'Why, some of our biggest nobs could tell you something

about them days. What do you think of me now? I'm a lifer myself.'

'Are you really?' I replied; 'how very interesting! But' (by way of apology)—'but in those days of course men were sent out for next to nothing.'

'So they were, so they were, young man. But mind you' (with a confidential wink), '*I wasn't sent out for nothing.*'

The mysterious importance with which he conveyed this latter piece of information convinced me at once that he had either roasted his wife alive, and basted her slowly during the operation, or at the least cut his father's throat with a ham-knife. So I replied:

'Oh, certainly not—of course not,' as much as to say, 'Don't for a moment suppose I would be guilty of such rudeness as to insinuate that you were sent out for anything under murder, my dear fellow.'

Old 'lags' have an honest pride in their antecedents that is most refreshing and novel. It is very easy to recognise them as one passes through the different villages on the road. The old men who hang about the stables of the inns are redolent

of Government discipline. The hangdog cringing look, the prison gait and close-shaven cheeks all tell of the convict gang, and the terror of corporal punishment which has indelibly been burnt into their souls.

I was once on a station on the Hunter River in New South Wales—a colony which in former days could rival Tasmania in convict horrors. This station was some seventy miles from Newcastle, and was in point of cultivation far in advance of any station I had then seen. The house was equal to the average of English gentlemen's country houses, and the grounds were well kept and tastefully planted. But the building could tell a tale of the early days that contrasted greatly with its comfortable aspect. It had been erected over the cells in which the prisoners were at one time lodged; and although when I saw them, these cells were only used by the gardeners for their tools, I saw the posts and rings to which the convicts were chained after their day's labour. In those days—some forty years ago—any settler could obtain free labour by applying for it. If the 'servants' proved refractory they were sent to the nearest magistrate with a letter for punishment.

They received a flogging and were sent home again, or elsewhere, as the case might be. This station on the Hunter was cleared of the big timber by convict labour, and its appearance at the present day, from the terrace of the house, is that of an English pleasure park.

Beautiful as it was, I could not help thinking of the wretched lives of the men who laboured to make those pleasant fields, not for love or greed, but through fear of whippings and death.

On my overland journey to Hobart Town I stopped at Campbell Town, Tunbridge, and Matlock, all little villages, prettily situated, and with comfortable inns. The very substantial manner in which all the streams are bridged, and the well-built stone houses, serve to keep the old convict system before your eyes. At several places we passed ruins of old barracks and cottages where the prisoners and their guards lived when making the road through the island. There must have been some excellent masons in those times. Stone abounds everywhere throughout Tasmania, and is an article of export. Some of the public buildings in Melbourne are built of it, and it has the reputation of being of an excellent quality.

I never saw such a swarm of rabbits as I did about Tunbridge. South Australia is pretty familiar with the 'rabbit nuisance,' but Tasmania is, if anything, in advance of her in this respect. Trout and salmon have been introduced most successfully into Tasmanian waters. Near Matlock there is very fair trout-fishing in some of the streams. I saw a salmon of eleven pounds weight which was killed in the Derwent River, near New Norfolk.

At New Norfolk there are salmon-breeding ponds, and they have hitherto been most fortunate in turning out healthy young fish.

The hop-gardens at New Norfolk are well worth a visit. The hop, no doubt, will be grown to a great extent at some future period in Tasmania. The climate seems admirably adapted to its well-being.

Hobart Town is on the river Derwent, and is an extremely pleasant place in the summer. The fresh breeze from the Southern Ocean brings the colour to many a dried-up visage, and is a splendid doctor for a debilitated frame. The Government House is second to none in point of taste and position in the colonies, and the view of the

harbour, or river as they call it, which is several miles in width, is very fine.

In every place that you visit people ask you, 'Have you been to see so and so?' In Melbourne it is, 'Have you seen the Library?' In Sydney, 'Have you been to the Botanical Gardens?' In Adelaide, 'Have you been up to the Eagle on the Hill?' Here in Hobart Town it is, 'Have you been up Mount Wellington?'

I do not believe in walking up mountains. I have had quite enough of that in my time, when mustering sheep in New Zealand. However, I drove up as far as I could, to a place where there is a little public-house, from which the rest of the ascent has to be done on foot.

I could easily imagine the view from the top of the mountain. It is a great deal more satisfactory to picture to yourself that view than to clamber over two miles of rocks, and then perhaps exclaim: 'Why, I have seen better than this in so and so.'

And so I thought to myself of the great expanse of harbour, and the Derwent winding its way up to New Norfolk; the picturesque town

nestled at the foot of the mountain; the ships and wharves; the sailing-boats gliding across the river; and the Government House standing out against a dark background of trees. Then for my foreground, I beheld the stately Huon pines and gums; the water-course where the sparkling stream dashed from rock to rock, kissing the fern-leaves in its sport, beside which I lay on my back and meditated, shaded from the hot sun, save where a playful beam peeped through the feathery branches.

The chief exports of Tasmania are stone, timber, jam, potatoes, wool, and young people of both sexes. Sheep and cattle are imported for butchers' use from other colonies. This does not look as if the island had a great surplus of live stock. The people are so far behind the times in most things, that in 1874 there was not even a crane in the port of Hobart Town for unloading ships. The fact of jam being an article of export proves that there must be a great quantity of fruit grown. The Hobart Town jams are celebrated all over the colonies. The land in Tasmania is poor as a rule, and the very rich soil is patchy, and of no great extent. Rock crops up

all over the island, and the country altogether is not one to rejoice the heart of a farmer.

There are some curious animals indigenous to Tasmania, such as the Tasmanian Devil, and the hyæna or tiger, a sort of striped quadruped between the wolf and the jackal. This animal is very rare, if not quite extinct. Most of the Australian marsupials are natives as well, but of the original native human beings there is not one left. They were most methodically 'wiped out' in the early days.

Whilst in Hobart Town I enjoyed some capital sea-fishing and bathing. The drives all round about the city are very beautiful, and I do not think that there could possibly be a pleasanter spot in which to spend a few months than the much-abused little island—notwithstanding the relics of the old 'system,' which, no doubt, will in time wear off.

CHAPTER XVII.

ENGAGED FOR THE ADELAIDE SEASON—PANTALOON IN THE PANTOMIME—THEATRICAL ANECDOTES.

MR. SAMUEL LAZAAR, the well-known lessee and manager, was making up a company for Adelaide, and arranged with Mrs. S—— to 'star' in his theatre for the season. Our company was made up in Melbourne, and contained several actors and actresses of reputation.

The morning on which we left Melbourne, we very nearly left our clown behind. We had thrown off the lines to the wharf, when we beheld him gesticulating and grimacing in a manner that caused roars of laughter. He had no money; what clown ever had, two days after his 'benefit'? and all his wardrobe was on board the steamer. The latter consisted probably of a few old wigs, a curious assortment of theatrical necessaries,

such as 'shirts,' tights, trunks, shoes, 'make-up' box, etc., and his legs; that is, what represented his legs at night. It is a singular thing, that there is hardly one man out of twenty who has a leg good enough to exhibit devoid of artificial help. I invariably wore what a friend of mine called 'fruit-dishes;' pieces of cloth so cunningly sewn together as to fit on neatly to that part of the leg where calves are supposed to be. I remember one of them coming down at heel one night, which must have had a very gouty effect.

Our clown was so well known in Melbourne, that he soon persuaded a boatman to row him off to the steamer: and it was a laughable sight to see him clamber up the side in his long gray coat, with a broad clown's grin on his good-natured face. Poor Tom! He came to sudden grief in after-years, and broke his neck.

Port Adelaide does not impress a new-comer as being the most delightful spot in the world; and passengers landing from steamers generally bless the arrangements that cause them to walk from the wharf to the railway-station. Things are better arranged in Newcastle, N.S.W. Instead of having to hire a truck and walk by the side of

it, for fear of losing the luggage, the railway company always have a van on the wharf in which all passengers' luggage is placed at once. I think this might be done also in Adelaide.

Leaving the port, we travel up to Adelaide, a distance of seven miles, the view from the carriage-windows improving as we get nearer the city. The river Torrens is exactly what I had heard of it, a stream that in dry weather you could cross, in many places, nearly dry-footed; and in time of floods, a mighty stream.

Adelaide is the most homely and the prettiest city of the colonies. Sydney has its harbour and its magnificent views; but Adelaide has its hills and its tastefully laid-out park-lands, its well-arranged streets, and, above all, the most hospitable, kindly people in the seven colonies. The city is admirably laid out, and is bounded by terraces forming a mile square.

Beyond these terraces are the park-lands, and beyond them are the suburbs. North Adelaide cannot be called a suburb, but is divided from Adelaide by the river, which is crossed by a handsome bridge; and the road from North Adelaide through the park-lands, with its avenues

of trees, makes the approach to the city exceedingly beautiful. A visitor is struck by the great number of steeples, and churches seem to crop up all over the town. From Victoria Square you can count no less than seven all close together. Many of the churches are of a good style of architecture, and I consider the Post Office, Town Hall, and some of the principal banks, to be unrivalled in point of taste by any buildings in Australia.

The country around Adelaide is very pretty; and the gardens and private residences make one imagine one's self at home. The drives up into the hills are delightful, and you can obtain magnificent views from the heights of the rich wheat-growing country beneath. Everything about Adelaide and its environs bespeaks the wealth and solidity of this great colony. The carriages and horses, with their thorough 'English turn-out' look, strike you as being considerably ahead of Melbourne or Sydney; and from this you would conclude that the owners of these carriages and horses must be equally ahead in point of culture and refinement. And perhaps your conclusion would be correct.

I took up my abode at the sign of the Red Lion Inn. I must say I like Red Lions, and Blue Dragons, and Black Horses. It sounds so friendly and homelike. What a lot of jolly old Red Lions I can bring to mind in the old country, with their bar-parlours and commercial-rooms where mysterious gentlemen unpacked mysterious parcels and bullied the boots in pompous tones, and the bar where the nice comfortable landlady was wont to beam on you from behind the brightly-polished beer-engines, as she drew you off a glass of 'mild' with a head on it. Poor old Sam Bright, the landlord, was then a strong hearty man. He was a victim of a buggy accident. He did not get killed at once, but the injuries he received caused his death.

I consider a buggy one of the most dangerous vehicles ever used. It is the common trap in the colonies, and used everywhere, up-country and in town. If a man is a fair driver and is careful, there is not any danger; but the average of men who hire buggies out of livery-stables are not careful, neither can they drive. Actors are continually coming to grief. They know as much about horses, as a rule, as they do of divinity.

Our esteemed lessee got capsized whilst I was in Adelaide, together with Mr. Fairclough and his agent. They had been to the races, and were, if anything, hilarious. One of them was in bed for three months with an injured hip; another broke a collar-bone and cut his eye; the third, our tragedian, got off with a bruised knee-cap, and a face generally disfigured. It happened to be a 'Command Night,' and the Governor was present at our performance of 'Macbeth.' This made the accident especially inconvenient, and it has always been a matter of wonder to me how Mr. Fairclough managed to play 'Macbeth' so admirably. I suppose that the excitement made him forget his pain whilst on the stage.

Our season was very successful, and we finished it with a pantomime. I do not know why, but I had a very particular ambition to play pantaloon. I was always very sorry in my youthful days for the pantaloon, and I regarded him with affection. He seemed such a pleasant old gentleman, and took those slaps in the mouth with such perfect good-humour, that I liked him very much, and this feeling of regard has never left my bosom. Practising for pantaloon is not an agreeable

course of training. It gave me a bilious attack. Looking back on that bilious attack, I attribute it chiefly to the fact of the clown and myself imbibing rum and milk every morning at seven a.m. prior to our commencing practice. We decided, at first, virtuously to have one rum and milk; but rum and milk is insinuating and nice, and one rum and milk often suggests the propriety of having just one more, especially if the morning air is chilly. Then we resorted to the theatre, and having divested ourselves of our coats, proceeded to revolve over and over, doing the wheelbarrow trick: 'You lie on your back and hold my shins; I stand over you and hold yours; then turn over.' This churned the rum and milk splendidly. I like the wheelbarrow trick. The first time we did it in public we were all but in the orchestra.

Playing pantaloon is far harder work than outsiders have any idea of. The pantaloon most likely has to play some part in the opening of the pantomime. My part was a cockatoo of gigantic proportions, which by fairy agency is turned into a prince, at the same time as the kangaroo and the 'possum undergo somewhat similar transformation. I had to get into a huge framework of cane covered

with canvas, have my head fixed on with its crest of nearly two feet high, and my bird's legs and feet properly adjusted. Then you should have heard the yells of delight from the gallery boys as I waddled on, and having suddenly elevated my crest rampant, sang out, 'Pretty Cockie!' But it was not half so amusing when the good fairy ordered us to change our forms.

Of course I had sidled near to the wing at which I had to make my exit, and where the assistants were waiting to relieve me of my carcase, and at the 'cue' I vanished into their arms. In a twinkling of an eye they took off my head and legs, and lifted my body over my head. This discovered me in my princely costume, and having popped on my curly wig and cap with ostrich plume, I waltzed on again in less than ten seconds. Have you a nose? I mean a real *good* nose? I have, and a prominent one.

Each night that those men relieved me of my cockatoo's head, I had my nose scraped. The head had to fit pretty close to my shoulders, and notwithstanding the revolting smell of size and glue in its interior, and my consequent anxiety to be out of it, I always dreaded having it taken off.

In the hurry to enable me to be on the stage again to my 'cue,' the assistants wrenched it off so violently as to make me nervous of losing my nose altogether.

I can remember saying so pathetically to Perryman, the mechanist, who was generally at the wing:

'Now do be careful, old boy; my nose is awfully sore.'

'That didn't touch it, old man, did it?' he would reply, at the same time relieving me of another half inch of skin. I wonder that I did not gain the sobriquet of Prince Bloody Nose.

Then, when my part was finished, I had to rush off to dress for pantaloon, whilst the 'Girards' gave their wonderful Legmania business, and the Grand March of Monkeys was performed. We had over a hundred 'larrikins' from ten to twelve years of age in the march, and it was amusing to see the delight the urchins took in it, and how perfect they became.

Making up for pantaloon is no treat. Having first of all applied a tallow candle, melted in the gas-jet, to the whole of your face, neck and ears, you proceed to powder freely with bismuth, than

which there is no more poisonous compound for the skin extant. Your white pantaloon's skull and 'appurtenances,' which consist of tufts of horse-hair and the usual red ball bobbing about at the end of a wire, is then carefully pulled on, so as not to remove any of the white on your face. Having melted a little tallow in an iron spoon and mixed up some rouge in it, you proceed to ornament your nose, eyes, and other portions of your face, in the approved-of pantaloon fashion. The lining of the pantaloon's face, you may observe, is considerably different to the clown's. Then you proceed to get into your old man's dress, with its frills and red tights; and by the time you are dressed and up on the stage, you find it is just the transformation scene, and amidst a blaze of red fire and blue lights you straddle on in the orthodox fashion with your stick, give an idiotic old man's chuckle, pretend to slip on a piece of orange-peel, and down you come on your back, to the intense delight of the gods. *Now* on comes the clown at the opposite entrance, and turns half a dozen somersaults in a gleeful manner, that informs the whole audience that he, at least, intends to enjoy himself. 'How are yer,

old 'un?' exchange slaps and around you go; harlequin, columbine, clown and pantaloon. In and out, under each other's arms; round again and again; up the harlequin leaps on your thigh, and the columbine on the clown's; tableau is formed; red fire and smoke; and the scene is closed in.

First scene, a well-known shop in the town. Thus begins the pantomime business that all the world is familiar with, and the harlequin performs most extraordinary leaps, as does also the clown; and the pantaloon sticks in the trap, and gets smacked by the harlequin, who reappears in quite an unexpected manner. And so on, until the fun runs higher and higher for the audience, and the perspiration runs down the backs of the performers; and they are all very glad when the last tableau arrives, when, amidst another blaze of red fire and limelight, they wish the audience good-night.

Then back to your dressing-room, where, prior to undressing and 'washing off,' you drink a pint of beer without a murmur, and then leisurely proceed to remove the obnoxious bismuth and tallow from your face. It is of no use being in a hurry,

for it requires time and patience, notwithstanding the hot water. Wrap up carefully, for you know that if you don't the chances are that you will catch a good cold, after your exertions. And then home to supper, where you spend the pleasantest portion of the day, laughing over the little mishaps and absurdities that have occurred during the evening.

Although I became very tired of theatrical matters, I often look back on those days with pleasure. Ridiculous things happen sometimes, and things are said in the course of a play that to a person with any sense of humour are very amusing. I was once representing some individual or other in 'Louis XI.' The king's physician had refused to attend to a certain sick peasant, and one of the indignant ones appealed to me. 'If he had been the son of a count, he'd have cured him, would he not?' To which I replied with a sagacious wink, '*You bet!*' It was purely a slip of the tongue, but the Yankee phrase sounded so malapropos that there was a general laugh both in front and on the stage; and when I 'came off,' the 'star' was not in the best of humours.

I remember an actor being apologized for by a certain manager as 'not being able to appear through sudden and serious indisposition, in consequence of which the leniency of the audience,' etc.

A voice from the dress circle was heard, after the speech had been duly applauded, 'Say he's drunk, Jack; say he's drunk, my boy!' and sure enough, there the individual stood, certainly suffering from serious indisposition caused by a too free indulgence in alcohol. This incident occurred in New Zealand.

I have met lady performers of very violent tempers, and on more than one occasion have known them to assert their rights in a forcible manner. In the opera of 'La Fille de Madame Angôt,' in Adelaide, a lady so lost her temper in the 'quarrel scene' as to smack the face of the second lady. The audience thought that they were acting capitally until ribbons and hair began to fly about pretty freely, and blood was drawn by a scientific tap administered to one of the ladies on her *nez retroussé*.

Another fair lady was so disgusted at a criticism that appeared in a paper at Ballarat that she pro-

ceeded to horsewhip the reporter who wrote it. Horsewhipping editors and reporters was quite the rage at one time in the colonies. No one who has not been behind the scenes, and does not know what the everyday life is, has any idea of the worry and anxiety of a theatrical manager. He is not only immersed in a maze of the most intricate business, but he is continually worried and annoyed by some little squabbles and jealousies in the company. Miss So-and-so declares that she was engaged for such a line of business, and refuses to play the part allotted to her, and Mr. Jinks complains that he is not having fair treatment, etc. So the manager has to coax or threaten as the case may be, wear a jovial face and affect a complacent manner, endeavour to keep everyone in a good humour and get things to run smoothly, whilst his mind is sorely perplexed the while about a thousand other matters.

The outside world suppose a great deal of immorality to exist behind the scenes. It is quite a mistake. Actors and actresses of the present day are quite as moral as the good people who attend that 'Little Bethel' so regularly. They have plenty of 'small vices,' and vanity is not the smallest.

But without vanity no man would attain any position in the world, whether he be actor or politician. Indeed, the two are not so far separated. Our great statesmen of the day are very tolerable actors, and I have no doubt that if they got up a performance at the Haymarket in which 'Cabinet Ministers *only*' were to appear, it would take immensely, and they would play their parts with the confidence of old professionals.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LOOKING FOR RESPECTABLE SITUATIONS—CAN'T GET ONE —A LITTLE ABOUT TROOPERS—BECOME GROOM TO A BREWER—DITTO TO TWO DOCTORS.

WEARIED of the knockabout roving life that I had been leading, I determined at the end of our theatrical season to remain in Adelaide. I thought that I could easily obtain some situation, and I conceived a great liking for the place. But I found that notwithstanding my having some very respectable friends in the place, it was not such an easy matter to obtain respectable employment. I applied to one firm for a clerkship, to another for the situation of traveller, and answered all sorts of advertisements.

Now, not only was my want of business reference a drawback, but I actually found that having

played pantaloon at the theatre was a great obstacle to my getting any sort of work whatever.

This struck me at the time as being narrow-minded and straitlaced on the part of the people of Adelaide. Being blessed with such liberal notions myself, it really had never occurred to me that playing pantaloon one week should render me unfit to fill any responsible situation the next week.

I saw no reason why I should not be accepted as a candidate for a vacant pulpit, supposing that there happened to be a ministration going a-begging. If there had been such a vacancy I should most decidedly have applied for it.

Why not? Clergymen should surely have vast worldly experience, else how can they avoid being bigoted and uncharitable in their verdicts on human nature? I regard St. Paul as the most perfect gentleman of his age, as he was also the most eloquent of the Apostles. Yet even he required to be awakened to a better state of things before he arrived at the conclusion that 'all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass.'

I never fancied the idea of becoming a trooper.

It is certainly a shade better than a policeman; but then a policeman is about the lowest thing that it is possible for a man to become, unless it is a billiard-marker. The trooper, or mounted policeman, is not unfavourably regarded in Australia in the country districts—that is to say, if he does not interfere too much. He has many ways of making money, too, if he is at all a judge of horseflesh. Notwithstanding my prejudice against the cloth, the fact of my being in arrears for my board and lodging made me apply for the situation. I was of an eligible height and weight, and could ride. Having obtained a letter of recommendation from one of my friends, I went up to the barracks and saw Captain Searcey, the chief officer of the mounted police. I rode to his satisfaction, was accepted as a candidate, and had my name entered in the books. I was told, however, that I might have to wait six weeks or more before a vacancy occurred. This did not happen to suit my financial arrangements.

On a subsequent occasion I very nearly became a member of the Sydney Police Force. So nearly, that I went through the whole performance of

weighing, measuring, riding, and medical examination. The pay was about seven shillings a day. I had only to go into barracks and I was 'booked' —but I 'funked' it. The Bohemian nature was so strong in me as to make me prefer any vagabond mode of existence to becoming a guardian of the peace. In Sydney I met with a gentleman who was then senior sergeant in the police, and head clerk in the Inspector General's Office. He advised me to go into the force, and my testimonials being accepted, I went up to the medical examiner to be passed.

The proper hour for examining candidates was between one and two p.m. But my duties at that time would not permit of my attending at that hour, so my friend in the office gave me a note and sent me to the doctor at nine a.m.

It was a chilly morning, and as I had never been under medical examination before, I no doubt felt chilly. It is not a pleasant operation. When I knocked at the door, I was shown in, as patients generally are; but when the doctor found that I was only a candidate for the police, he was very much displeased. I handed the note from the office, but he declared the whole proceeding

to be irregular and a 'pretty good piece of impertinence.'

I took up my hat and prepared to beat a retreat, but he objected.

'Oh no, never mind, now you *are* here. Just walk into the next room, and take your things off.'

I felt quite sure that he would discover a flaw in me somewhere, for having annoyed him. As I stood stark naked on the bare oilcloth, I wondered what it would be — congested lungs, heart-disease, or badly-developed back sinews to the legs? Presently he came in, and tapped me on the chest, made me walk, read with one eye shut, and go through a variety of other gyrations.

'Anything ever the matter with you?' he inquired.

'No, sir.'

'You look rather white in the face.'

'Took a blue pill last night, sir.'

'What did you do that for?'

'Bilious, sir.'

'Often bilious?'

'Only when I eat or drink too much, sir.'

'What's that tattoo mark on your arm?'

'*N'importe*, sir.'

'I can see that—what does it imply?'

'Never mind, sir.'

'Oh! That'll do—dress.'

He took the candidates' book, and wrote 'Fit' opposite my name; which implied that he considered me a healthy subject.

This was more than I expected from him. It is gratifying to find that after all your knocking about and sinful doings you are actually sound. I felt almost inclined to insure my life, but I knew that if I did I should most likely let the premium lapse.

My next duty was to visit the barracks, and go through the riding business. At the Sydney barracks there was an old-trick horse kept for the special delectation of candidates who were under the impression that they could ride. Sergeant Thompson took a delight in seeing these young fellows come off. I knew all about this artful old dodger, and was prepared for the worst. Having saddled him, I took him out on the green, and walked him round. So long as I only walked, he went all right, but directly the sergeant sang out

'Canter!' down went his head, his back curled up like a tom-cat's, and his heels reached an elevation somewhere over my head. A good cut with a cane, and a kick in the ribs with my heels, sent him back into a proper frame of mind, and he cantered pleasantly round.

'You'll do: dismount. You stuck on very well,' said the sergeant, in a disappointed tone.

'Well, the fact is, sergeant, I have heard of this horse before,' I replied.

However amusing this horse's performances may be to the sergeant and lookers-on, I am not quite sure that it is fair to test the 'sticking' capabilities of candidates in this manner. If a man rode ever so well, he might get unseated by a sudden 'back.' I knew what was coming, or I am sure I should have gone to grass.

I never joined the force after all. I believe that if I had, I should have got into a great many scrapes; very likely have been had up for aiding and abetting. Most of the police in the colonies hail from the Emerald Isle. I have known many very good fellows in the troopers. Not many years ago there was a baronet in the N. S. Wales mounted police. He was killed by a revolver

accidentally going off. He was a Bohemian.—R.I.P.

But to return to my Adelaide experiences, I made up my mind to accept the first 'billet' that offered itself. I applied to a doctor, one whose acquaintance I have since made. He had evidently seen me at the theatre. He wanted a coachman, and listened to my account of my equine abilities most attentively. He then kindly bowed me out, murmuring to himself no doubt, 'Yes, I fancy I've seen you before.' I applied for a clerk's situation in a lawyer's office, and stated in writing all the good I knew of myself. It was not much, evidently; not enough to obtain the place, at all events.

I was a candidate for the situation of traveller at the Lion Brewery, a position that I reckoned myself admirably adapted for. Out of eighty-nine applicants, I was one of the ten who were selected to choose from: this was flattering. I was also one of the nine who did not get it: this was mortifying.

But perseverance is always rewarded. A brewer wanted a groom and useful man out at his country house, four miles from Adelaide. He

was a liberal-minded man, for he engaged me without many words. He was a jolly brewer, as most brewers are, and I took a liking to him at once. I accordingly walked out to his place one morning in a correct groomy costume—which means cord trousers, stick-up round collars, and a tweed jacket—and commenced work.

I enjoyed the walk out to Burnside on that lovely morning, and felt in wonderful spirits.

I was leaving the gas, the late hours, and the rehearsals all behind me. I was going in for rustic life—fresh air and regularity—with a pound a week for pocket-money. Nothing can be more charming than a bright Australian spring morning, when all Nature seems to be holding jubilee, from the noisy frog to the musical magpie. The house was at Burnside—a snug little villa standing in about sixteen acres of grounds. Roses, both hedge and standard, geraniums and spiraxis, all in full bloom, lined each side of the drive; and that rarity in Australia, a running brook of water, lent an extra enchantment to the scene.

My quarters, the stables, were about two hundred yards behind the house; and there I

found a small boy sitting on an inverted bucket, sanding bits and stirrup-irons.

'Hulloa!' he cried; 'are you the new chap?'

I informed this young individual that I *was* the new chap. He thereon gave me a full and particular history of everything, and everybody about the place.

'My name's Charlie. What's yours? Oh, 'Enery. Well, 'Enery, there's two 'orses; Comose—that's the boss's 'ack—and the pony what draws the pheāton. Then there's three cows down in the paddock. You have to milk them before seven, or else the governor growls like billy-ho. There's four pigs—no, stoopid, not *milk the pigs*—they're always a-mucked out of a Saturday; that's *your* job—leastways, the last chap did it. Then there's a heap of fowls and geese, what are fed on grains from the brewery; and a peacock with two young uns. I suppose the boss told you about the wood for the house? My! ain't it tough! All roots! What do I do? Why, I cleans the boots and knives for the house, and lends a hand about. I like the stable work best. You'll want me to help you, won't you? Come on, and see the young peacocks.'

Near my stables there was a small dam in the creek overhung with willows. This promised a morning bath, which was comforting after what Charlie said about the pigs.

In a week I had become quite at home. 'I milked the pigs, washed the fowls, groomed the trap, and "mucked out" the cows of a Saturday.' The brewer and I got on first-rate. He frequently lent me his favourite hack 'Comus'—or 'Comose,' as Charlie called him—to ride into town; and altogether treated me most kindly. It is a thing worthy of note that in my curious experiences I should have fallen in with such a pleasant lot of people. It makes one feel that it is a kindly old world, and that the majority of our troubles are of our own making.

That part of my work which I disliked most was milking the cows. No groom has an affection for cows, and my natural sympathy for the stable induced me to share the class prejudice.

What is there about a cow that renders it contemptible? It is one of our most useful animals, and one we could ill afford to lose. Why, then, is 'cow' such a common word of reproach? If a

horse shows awkwardness in harness, or in the stable, 'Stand over there, you *cow!*' cries the groom.

On a long stage one of the horses betrays symptoms of fatigue, and does not pull so heartily as the others. 'Hey! get along there, you *cow*-hearted, slab-sided, *cow*-built wretch!' shouts the driver, as he draws his whip around the unfortunate's flank.

The bullock-driver, in a fit of passion at his team, stuck up at a steep 'pinch' in the road, has exhausted his voluminous stock of blasphemy and abuse. As a last resort, he yells, 'Yah! you call yourselves *bullocks*, do you? You're nothing but a lot of —— *cows!*' If this insult does not move them, nothing will—short of unloading the dray.

I never got on well with cows. I had to milk my cows in the morning immediately after the horses were fed and watered. They were in a paddock about two hundred yards from the house, and were well-behaved enough to walk up to the shed when they saw me coming. But then I always took them down two buckets of grains, of which we had a weekly supply from the brewery.

One of three cows I had to manipulate was an ill-tempered, crumpled-horned old beast, with a good deal too much white in her eye to please me. I managed the other two pretty well; and with the exception of receiving a cut in the eye from the tail of one of them, which nearly blinded me for life, escaped without injury. That is another thing I hate about cows: whilst you are milking them, they insist on taking 'pot-shots' at you with their tails. A cut with a cow's tail not only smarts, but is often a filthy and undesirable weapon wherewith to be assaulted.

When it came to the vicious cow's turn to be milked, I determined to try a soothing and gentle mode of proceeding. I was told that she objected to the 'leg-rope.' She baled up quietly enough and began to eat her grains, pausing only now and then to put her tongue up her nose (in the way peculiar to cows), and watch me with her wicked white eye.

I think her teats were sore; for after I had extracted about a pint, she deliberately lifted up her off hind-leg and 'dobbed' it down into the milk-pail, as much as to say, 'That'll do now; come, drop it.'

Not to be beaten, I 'leg-roped' her in such a manner as to defy a repetition of the disaster. She butted me on the head with her stifle joint, and I fetched up at the other end of the shed on the *mire!*

I tried persuasion, applying a paling with all my force to her ribs. She became furious, broke her leg-rope, pulled up the bale in which she stood, and careered round the paddock with it on her horns.

That cow and I never made friends. She showed symptoms of insanity whenever she beheld me. I gave her up, and one of the maids took her in hand with better success.

Altogether I had plenty of work to get through in the course of a day; but my master and mistress were so particularly kind and considerate, that the months slipped pleasantly by. It is impossible to say how long I might have remained in this situation; but my master suddenly made up his mind to go to Tasmania for a long visit, and thus I was again thrown upon my own resources. Having a good local character, however, was a very great help, and enabled me to obtain a 'place' immediately.

The same day that I wished good-bye to the brewer, I entered the service of a celebrated Adelaide doctor as coachman. This doctor kept two men—a coachman and groom. The groom had to drive the doctor on his rounds, and the coachman had to drive the doctor's wife out visiting, etc., about three times a week. The grooming devolved chiefly on the coachman. There were five or six horses kept in the stable, as a rule, and the 'night-work' was evenly divided between the two servants. It was very seldom that our good doctor ever troubled us at night. He did not believe in taking either us or his horses out in the night air.

If he could manage it, he used to walk when called up; and if the distance was too great, he would generally take a cab. I had happy times with the doctor; but he suddenly made up his mind to go to England, and thus I was again left in the lurch.

He entrusted his practice to another man for a year, and wished me particularly to stop on until his return. His successor did not happen to require two men, and I had no great fancy for driving 'doctor's rounds.' It is a description of

driving that palls upon one after a few weeks. I gave notice and left. Doctors, as I remarked before in my Melbourne experiences, are no joke. They are the worst billets that a groom can obtain.

CHAPTER XIX.

COACHMAN TO A SWELL—OUR FOUR-IN-HAND—NOTES ON SERVANT LIFE—A GRAND GARDEN-PARTY—MISTOOK HER FOR A LADY'S-MAID—TIPPING

THE day on which I left the doctor I entered the service of a gentleman who kept up a large establishment. In that situation I remained three years, and I mark those three years in red letters. Certainly the position of coachman is not what I was born to, neither is it what my godfathers and godmothers designed for me at the baptismal font. However, I can assure you, dear reader, that there are a great many less endurable positions in life than being servant to a gentleman, and you would be astonished how quickly you would get into the habit of saying 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir,' without any feeling of degradation. I do not suppose that I should have remained three

years in that family unless I had become very much attached to them; but I was so happy with my horses and so comfortable in my home life, that the time slipped unwittingly away.

The fact of my obtaining various situations so quickly speaks well for the colony. No man need be many days out of work in Australia—it does not matter what colony—if he is willing to put his hand to anything. I should never feel any pity for a man out of employment in the colonies. If he cannot manage to 'keep the ship afloat' by some means or other, he is either a drunkard or a loafer. To my mind, Australia is the grandest country in the world for the working man. The wages are high, work plentiful, food cheaper than in England, especially meat, etc., and the climate not to be equalled. And yet I have often heard men grumbling out there, and boasting of 'How much better off they were in the old country.' These men are the very ones who were probably in a state of destitution at home, and did not know what 'plenty' signified until they emigrated.

The family that I served were all lovers of horses, and took a great delight in their favourites.

I think this affection for dogs and horses runs in families. It used to be a pleasure for me to see 'my young ladies' walk round the boxes, and talk to their particular pets, distributing a few delicacies, such as vine or lettuce leaves, to each. We always had eight horses in the stables, sometimes more, and my master was never so happy as when bowling along with his drag well loaded with convivial souls. Our four-in-hand was the best turn-out in Adelaide, though I know of one or two gentlemen who will dispute this to the death. Adelaide could turn out some teams that would not disgrace our London Four-in-Hand Club, and there existed that wholesome spirit of rivalry in such matters that is so good to see.

I had two grooms, who matched so well in livery that they were known in Adelaide as the twins. There is a great deal in having grooms to match. Many a good turn-out is spoilt through pure want of taste in these little matters.

Our household consisted of nearly all old servants. Most of them had been in the family for periods of five to fifteen years. During my life in service I had many opportunities of noticing things that escape the master's eye, and became

familiar with the real inner life of domestics in general. The following quotation from Buxton's 'Notes of Thought' shows how deeply the author must have considered the subject of servant-life:

'Novelists have left almost wholly waste one large and interesting field. Why do none of them give us a vivid picture of servant-life as seen from within? Servants come into novels freely enough, but merely as a chance help to the tale. What I want is that some genial man should go about amongst them, should really lay hold on their thinkings and feelings, and not merely give us an odd character here and there, but let us into the general idea of servant-life. Let us feel ourselves to be butlers and ladies'-maids for the time, instead of masters and mistresses.'

For a novelist to go about amongst them and lay hold on their thinkings and feelings would necessitate that novelist becoming a servant himself. Novelists, as a rule, would find it no easy task to perform a servant's duties. If Ouida could only obtain the situation of lady's-maid for a few months, she might perhaps give the world a good

account of her experiences. But Ouida would probably object to such an arrangement for the public gratification. Even if she acceded to the plan, her qualifications as a domestic might lead to a shorter experience of the life than she required for the purpose.

Imagine the gifted and popular author, Mr. Anthony Trollope, in the capacity of a butler! Yes; Buxton was right. A man may believe himself to be perfectly acquainted with 'life below stairs,' but unless he has actually experienced it, he is totally ignorant on the subject.

Has it ever struck you, masters of many servants, how intimate the valet or groom who waits upon you is with your most private family affairs? Are you aware that your hopes and disappointments form the table conversation in the servants' hall, and are commented upon in the stable-yard? Do you know that any great family sorrow or joy is discussed amongst your domestics with as great an interest almost as it is amongst yourselves? However well aware people may be of these things, they do not heed them much, and talk before their footmen or grooms as if they were 'things that have ears, yet

hear not.' How often do you young ladies, totally ignoring the presence of the coachman or footman, pull to pieces your most intimate friends, and ridicule people with whom your servants on the box are quite as familiar, in their own way, as you are!

Your servants therefore are intimate with all your doings and all your ways, almost participators in your very thoughts. What do you know of them? You see them, and speak to them when you have any orders to give. You like this one because he is smart and thoughtful in providing for your wants; you tolerate that one because, though not so quick and careful, he is a good servant in other respects, and so on. They remain with you for years. Of their belongings, their hopes or disappointments, you know nothing, neither do you wish to. Why should you? They are well paid, well fed, not overworked, and there's an end of it. If they misbehave themselves they are easily replaced? Not so: a good servant is exceedingly hard to replace.

A trustworthy servant is unpurchasable except by the exchange of trust. If a man has trust and confidence placed in him by his master, he will

respond, unless he be of a very base disposition. But I have generally found that servants are not traitors, in this respect. If a servant feels that he is watched or mistrusted, he will surely grow sullen and contumacious, shuffling and cunning to avoid blame.

A word of praise given in due season will often make a good servant; but good conduct passed by unnoticed will frequently mar one. I have known good lads spoilt through this very thing. For instance, in taking pains with harness, etc., I have heard lads remark, 'Oh, what's the use of killing yourself? The "gaffer" never takes any notice, as long as things are decent.' When servants of any sort cease to take a pride in their particular work, they are useless. It is therefore a judicious plan to take notice of everything, find fault on occasion, and commend where praise is due.

It is a great mistake for mistresses to interfere with the men. The maids alone belong to their department. At the same time, a kindly word of inquiry as to his well-being will often render a man devoted to the interests of a mistress. I have known masters who were given to fret them-

selves on the grounds of there being insufficient work for those that they employed. This was at times when the family was comparatively quiet. But they did not take into consideration the busy times and late hours when their houses were inundated with visitors. In such slack seasons I have seen them, in servants' parlance, 'poking about' trying to hunt up little jobs, and querulously lamenting that there should be 'so little to do.'

Servants hate this manner of proceeding. They are liable to be called upon at any hour, night or day, and their whole time is devoted to their masters' will. So that they look forward to and enjoy a quiet week occasionally when they can take their time in getting things in order, as well as their masters enjoy repose after a season of gaiety.

A good servant dislikes changing his situation, as much as a master does the annoyance of having fresh servants. If he has been for some years in a family, he cannot help becoming attached to some of its members. When he leaves, they probably remember him no more; but his years of servitude are not so easily cast off, or his associa-

tions with a happy bondage broken without regret.

I have often heard masters address servants in an affected tone of voice. For instance, a gentleman is getting into his phaeton, and the groom is standing at the horses' heads:

Master (naturally to a friend). 'Well, goodbye, old boy. Don't forget to come over on Thursday.' (To groom, in a perfectly different tone) 'Aw—William, those couplings are wrong. Take that near rein up a couple of holes.'

The groom recognises the affectation of tone and hauteur in his master's manner in a second; and as he jumps up behind, it gives him matter for reflection.

Why cannot a man speak as naturally and pleasantly to his servant as to his friend? Is it necessary for the maintenance of his position that he should affect another voice and an uneasy demeanour? If so, his position is a very insecure one; and it is that knowledge which makes him afraid lest by any undue familiarity with his inferior he should endanger it. These men are rank snobs, and not fit to have servants. They are men whom the accidental possession of wealth

has placed in positions that they were never intended for by Nature.

An old coachman friend of mine used frequently to remark, 'Ah, there's nothing like living with a real gentleman after all.'

My old friend did not mean a man of wealth, but a man who was at ease with his servants, and considerate in all his ways. You may think that a servant is a poor judge of what a real gentleman is. Believe me that he is an excellent judge, and can discern with nicety between the 'gentleman' who gives him half a crown and the 'cad' who bestows on him his sovereign.

In the servants' hall you will find as much politeness and propriety as in the dining-room. Each servant is entitled to a certain position in servant society, and this position is as much recognised amongst themselves as divers positions are amongst their betters. Servants in good families, for instance, affect considerable superiority over those in humble situations. Until I became Mr. Plunger (we all went by our masters' names), I was nobody. I then suddenly found myself not only very much in request amongst the swell coachmen, but actually beginning to look

down upon 'doctors' men' as an inferior grade of human beings. Such is the world!

The code of morality observed below stairs is quite equal to that which exists amongst the higher and better educated classes; but I have observed that servants take the tone of the family that they serve. If it is a rakish, loose sort of family, and everything is at sixes and sevens, the same characteristics are to be noticed in the domestics, and *vice versâ*.

Whilst I was in service, I had frequent opportunity of noticing the conversation and manners of my superiors.

I was in attendance upon 'my young ladies' one afternoon at a very grand garden-party. There were strings of carriages drawn up, waiting to carry away their fashionable freights. I had drawn up behind the Governor's carriage, and passed the time in flicking flies off my horses, and watching the elaborate toilets of the ladies.

Occasionally the coachman or footman on the vice-regal equipage would turn round to me and make some such remark as:

'I say, Mr. Plunger, do you notice that gent with Miss Splashaway? I think he means it!'

To which I would reply:

'Yes, I think it's a case of orange-blossoms. By-the-bye, Sir Anthony, do you give a reception to-morrow? I think I heard my governor say something about its being put off!'

As I was watching the trains of silk, and mentally admiring, or finding fault, a lady and gentleman walked past my carriage. Gentleman with eyeglass, lavender kids, and frock-coat, *à la* garden-party. Lady, rustling and animated, mauve silk robe trimmed with undeniable Brussels, gliding with swan-like grace over the close-shaven lawn.

Lady (suddenly contemplating a flower-bed, and bending in the attitude that she had perfected so nicely before her cheval glass at home). 'Now, I really *do* wonder what that plant can be! *Do* you know, Mr. Swellington?'

Swellington. 'Don't know, I am sure—aw. Not much up in—aw—what d'ye call it, and that sort of thing. Ah, here's a man who can inform us. I say, Duffer! Mrs. Golightly is dying to know—aw—what this plant can be.'

Duffer. 'That? why, that's a—er—'pon my soul, gone clean out of my head. Not one of

the—er—you know what I mean—is it? Here, Robinson! We are in a great dilemma. Can't decide the—er—genus of this plant.'

Robinson (who is not quite a fool). 'That? why that's a hyacinth, of course.'

Omnes (in chorus). 'Oh, so it is—a hyacinth!'

As I sat on my box, I came to the conclusion that stable-talk was more bearable than this garden-party twaddle. The greater part of the conversation indulged in at these unsociable meetings (which are really only dressmakers' benefits) is of the description I have described. I cannot imagine harder work than being a hanger-on of fashionable society, and having to listen to the inane remarks that emanate from the idiots who compose the better half of it.

Ladies'-maids, nowadays, dress so uncommonly like their mistresses, that it is a matter of difficulty to distinguish between them.

My master sent me up to town one morning to assist the young ladies of our family, who were busily engaged in getting up amateur theatricals. The entertainment was to be given in a hall hired for the purpose in Adelaide; and the invitations

had been issued, and the supper ordered at the confectioner's. Between three and four hundred guests were expected. My orders were to wait at the hall until I was wanted, and not to go up in livery.

I was watching some men arranging the stage, and thinking of old times, when a nice-looking girl walked up and asked me if any of the ladies had arrived. I replied in the negative, and she then requested my assistance in carrying some boxes out of a cab at the door.

I knew that 'our lady's-maid' was coming up that morning with 'our young ladies' things,' so I concluded that this was another 'lady's-maid' who was also in attendance on her mistress.

After the cab went away we entered into conversation. I remember telling her that I thought the theatricals would be rather a lark, and that we were all coming up in the evening to see the fun. I am not quite sure that I did not invite her into the back-parlour of the hotel to have a glass of wine. I was generally very polite in that way. We were getting on first-rate when Margaret, 'our lady's-maid,' came hurrying up the steps with a number of parcels in her arms. I gallantly

ran to meet her and relieve her of her burden, and commenced telling her some nonsensical piece of gossip; when she stopped me suddenly, and whispered:

'Don't be so foolish, with Miss de Smithers standing there.'

The supposed lady's-maid with whom I had been making so free was a young lady of high degree, waiting to see my young mistress. However, to have apologized would have made matters worse. She must have thought that Mr. Plunger's servants were pretty cool hands.

The fashion of 'tipping' servants is not carried to the absurd extent in the colonies that it is in England; still, it exists there, as I believe it does in all parts of the world. It is quite possible though, in Australia, for a man to pay a visit of three or four days at a friend's house without feeling mean at not parting with as many pounds. I knew of one gentleman who made a point of telling visitors not to 'tip' his servants. This is going too far; for I think that an occasional gratuity is not out of the way, especially if the servant is civil and obliging. A friend of mine asked me if I ever accepted 'tips' whilst in

service. Most decidedly I did. Not to have done so would have at once made me peculiar and unlike my fellows.

In the stable, and particularly in livery stables, there is a box into which all tips are placed. This is called 'Bunt.' When the box is pretty weighty and funds are low, there is an equal division. I consider that grooms ought always to be tipped if taken out at night by visitors, or otherwise given extra work by them. They look for it, and in my opinion deserve it. When a man accepts a seat on a drag, he cannot do less than give the grooms five shillings each. Race-days, hunt-meetings, picnics, etc., are the very times when the groom is hard-worked, and when the visitors on the drag are best enjoying themselves.

A Christmas-box is a wholesome institution too. Most likely the master makes arrangements for his servants to have certain holidays at Christmas. The few pounds that come to hand by Christmas-boxes pay the holiday expenses, and are very acceptable.

Servants are not a provident race, and for one who saves anything out of his wages there are

ninety-nine who spend the whole. This arises in measure from their feelings of dependence, and very often the want of interest taken in such matters by their masters. If they get sick or old, they expect—if they ever consider the matter—that the family they serve will take care of them. The family does so in some cases. If it does not, God knows what becomes of them.

In England half a crown is the open-sesame to many doors besides railway-carriages; it is often the only key by which you can extract the information you require; and it is a coin that you have frequently to press into the palms of all sorts of individuals to obtain that which is legally your own. I grudge a box-keeper at the theatre his 'tip' more than anyone in the world. The bare-faced manner in which he silently demands it, and the contemptuous way in which he pockets it, is too much. The women, too, who take the ladies' cloaks at places of entertainment are a class who ought to be exterminated in any civilized country.

'Tipping' has existed since time immemorial, and will no doubt continue to exist. But when it becomes a tax, and is exacted as a right, it is quite

time that people should become more sparing in flinging their loose coins about. Judiciously administered, a tip will often gratify both donor and receiver, and assist the establishment of a mutually good understanding.

I was often asked curious questions whilst in my various situations as a servant. When engaging with one gentleman I was put through a very close examination, either through curiosity or a disbelief in my appearance. It could hardly have been the latter, however, as I applied with a written character from a former master, and, as I have before remarked, my careful study of a groom's dress and manner always enabled me to pass for the character that circumstances had compelled me to assume.

Besides, my knowledge of my business was at once sufficient to disarm suspicion. However good gentlemen may be with the 'ribbons' or in the saddle, and however competent to give directions, I think most of them would not know very much about the mysteries of cleaning stable-gear, or even well-'strapping' a horse. This gentleman that I have mentioned began by asking me how long I had been out in the colonies.

'Six months, sir.'

'Oh, and you came out from England to Adelaide?'

'No, sir. I've been eight or nine years out; but I've been in the other colonies during that time.'

'Rolling-stone, eh? That's bad. What part of England are you from?'

'Blankshire, sir.'

'What's your father?'

'Corn-chandler, sir.'

'Any brothers?'

'Two, sir.'

'What are they doing?'

'Both in service, sir.'

'Whose?'

'One is coachman to Lord Bumper, and the other is in Squire Nobby's stable.'

'Oh! all in the same line, eh?'

'Yes, sir.'

It made me perspire to tell so many lies all at once; but there is an old saying that if you tell one, you must tell fifty to cover it.

If that man had inquired what my grandmother was, I think I should have put her in service too.

When put on my mettle as to my home relations, the least I could do was to provide for them all comfortably and respectably. Now if a servant does his work and behaves 'hisself,' what's the odds whether his father is a corn-chandler or a field-marshal?

CHAPTER XX.

THOUGHTS ON THE COACH-BOX—AT THE CHURCH DOOR —A HUNT-DAY WITH THE ADELAIDE HOUNDS—THAT UNDERTAKER—AFTER THE HUNT.

As our church was at some distance from the house, inconveniently far to walk, the carriage was required every Sunday morning at a quarter to eleven. Unless orders were sent round to the stable to countermand it, I was in attendance at that hour as a matter of course. After church my duties for the day were done, as one of the grooms always remained at home to feed the horses, go round the boxes, and be within call in case anything happened to be wanted.

The church that we patronised had a gentleman for incumbent who belonged to the muscular Christian division of the High Church. He was one of those men who believed in a certain

degree of decoration and ritual; but for all that, did not pretend to disdain a quiet game of billiards, or under-rate any of the pleasant things of this life. His powerful frame and hearty manner were suggestive of morning 'tubs,' cricket-matches, or stroke-oar in a boat; and his pleasant unaffected address had that agreeably contagious effect of making people light-hearted—the happiest contagion that a man can carry about with him in this world of 'bile.' It would be well if there were more clergymen, both at home and in the colonies, imbued with this gentleman's belief. There would be more real good done, a more charitable doctrine preached, and less bitterness of denominational feeling.

Waiting at the church door, I had ample time to notice the different peculiarities of the people as they came out. People have very different ways of coming out of church.

Here is one portly old gentleman with a rubicund complexion, who elevates his nose as he struts impatiently out of the porch just as quickly as decency will allow him. He has all the inclination to run as hard as he can, but his running days are over, and even if that were not so, he has

far too much regard for appearances to do anything so vulgar. He has not been so long without a 'snack' for seven days, and his gastric juices remind him keenly of the fact. He is sniffing in imagination that boiled leg of pork and pease-pudding that he knows will be awaiting him on his return home. His week-day habit is to make a substantial lunch in a certain back parlour of an hotel, where he appears as regularly as clock-work. There he demolishes enough bread and cheese and 'polony' to satisfy a navvy for dinner, and of course moistens the dry repast with two or three glasses of 'colonial' ale. He misses this meal very much to-day ; but his appetite for his dinner is so much better for having fasted since breakfast, that he mentally resolves to knock off his week-day luncheons. And that is why he smacks his lips so ardently, for the resolution conjures up pictures of a splendid appetite *every* day. As this old gentleman passes my carriage, I wonder to myself whether he makes this resolution every Sunday. I conclude that he does, and likewise breaks it on the following Monday morning.

The next person I remark is a very good young

man who attends church regularly. He has on his Sunday clothes, and although the sun is far too hot for such a head-cover, he invariably appears in a black 'bell-topper.' He is carrying a young lady's hymn-book, and comes out of the porch very daintily in time to the slow music that is playing them out. He cannot help looking at his boots, because they are new on to-day, and of patent leather. So he takes care not to step into a puddle which is not quite dried. Somehow or other, I do not think this young man will enjoy his Sunday dinner. He will be too anxious that no gravy is spilt on his white waistcoast, and if he should by accident rub the sleeve of his coat in the mustard, I am quite sure that he will not take any pudding.

A young lady is now coming out of the porch, and I am sorry to say that she is giggling. As she passes me, I actually hear her make remarks to another young lady about 'that old frump.' She is a very naughty young lady; though I do not believe she will eat any the less dinner for that. When she gets home she will relate a great many things which happened in church, and be able to tell her mother—who stopped at home to

shell the peas—about everything that everybody had on. I do not think she will be able to tell her much about the sermon.

But here comes quite a *blasé* young gentleman. He carries a cane, and is humming a tune to himself as he comes out of the porch. As he passes my horses he stops and remarks to a companion, with a knowing air:

'Deuced nice pair of "prads," Jim, eh?'

He evidently wishes the public to understand that he does not go to church *every* Sunday, and that he only looked in to-day just to have a glance at the 'charming creatures.' This young man serves behind a counter in a grocer's shop on a week-day. I can tell that because he has one hand ungloved, and there is no mistaking the paw of a grocer's assistant.

How differently I regard this quiet lady in deep mourning who now comes out, leading a little boy. She has lately lost her husband. This is the saddest day in all the week for her, and hangs heavily. During the week she is busily employed, but each Sunday brings time for reflection, and her memory goes back to those happy Sundays which she spent when he was yet alive.

My meditations were then disturbed by my own young ladies coming out of the porch, and I suddenly descended from my flight of cynical criticism, or maudlin sentiment, to the coach-box. Then when I heard the carriage-door closed, and knew that the ladies were comfortably settled, I would intimate to 'Tom and Jerry,' that they should proceed.

'Steady, Tom! steady, boys! Don't be in such a hurry; your appetites seldom vary, and you wear as good clothes and fare as well on a week-day as you do to-day.' Thus thinking to myself, I begin to feel as if I wanted *my* dinner.

Another time it is a Hunt Day, and the hounds meet at my master's house. The Adelaide Hunt Club is one of the most popular institutions in the colony. At the period I am writing of, my master was secretary, and his brother was master of the A.H.C. The hounds are of good strains, and can boast of some of the celebrated Belvoir blood. Although it is impossible to have anything but a drag hunt in the neighbourhood of Adelaide, the sport is a good deal better than none at all. I have heard men remark—men who never faced a rail in their lives—'that they could not see any

sport in riding after a red herring, and you should see the hunting at home !'

We are all pretty familiar with what the 'hunting at home' is like, and we also know that it is as impossible to have fox-hunting near Adelaide as it is to chase kangaroos in the vicinity of Smithfield. In South Australia the fences are nearly all of wire; and for one post and rail fence you see a dozen with no top rail, but only the wire. The hunt being popular, the farmer makes no objection to it crossing his lands, and where the 'drag' goes over wire, the wire is capped; that is, several panels of the fence have a temporary top rail lashed along, so that the leap is visible and safe. There are plenty of men who hunt in England, and yet have never taken posts and rails, many who have hardly ever jumped a ditch. Let me advise those men to practise jumping a little, should their destiny be likely to lead them to follow the Adelaide Hounds.

On the day of the meet we were very busy in the stable. There was plenty of running over to the railway-station with traps to meet lady visitors, and numbers of carriages to receive, and horses to 'stow away,' two in a box. Of course

our stable accommodation was insufficient for our guests, so we arranged cases and boxes along a fence behind the coach-houses, where forty or fifty horses could be tied up and fed without any danger of their kicking each other.

At one o'clock the terrace and lawn in front of the house presented a gay appearance, with the ladies in their pretty morning costumes and the gentlemen in pink. But I noted with inward satisfaction that there were not many tops that looked as well as my governor's, and none of the ladies, in my opinion, that came up to my 'young missuses.' Being a servant, I was of course perfectly free to make such remarks to myself. Writing of my servant life, I merely relate what my impressions then were.

On such a day as this, all hands were pressed into the luncheon service, and the grooms and I assisted in waiting at the tables. We had that day donned brand-new liveries, and as servants take a considerable pride in their liveries, we thought ourselves rather smart. My business was to hand round champagne at my master's table, while Giles the gardener and two of his assistants unwired the bottles in the hall.

Over one hundred people were seated at luncheon, and they did not boast of a single Rechabite. The quantity of 'jumping powder' got through in a short space of time was astonishing.

As waiting was quite out of our line, we made a good many mistakes, and I, for one, lifted the wine-glasses off the table to fill them, until my master whispered to me not to do so. It was not very easy to fill them on the table, as the guests sat rather close together. There was such a lot of talking too, that I could not make out what they said when I asked them if they would have 'champagne, sir?' So I took it for granted, and wherever I saw an empty glass, I filled it up. Several times I was on the point of saying, 'Come, stand over, will you? Just put your head on one side, my noble sportsman, whilst I fill you up.'

One old gentleman, who evidently came for the lunch, for he hunted in a pony-carriage, took a deal of filling up. I am sure that two bottles of Clicquot did not bring him to anything like Plimsoll mark. I put him down for extra heavy tonnage.

All the members of the Hunt Club were invited to these Hunt luncheons, and the Hunt boasted of a motley crowd, as most Hunts do.

A sporting undertaker was one of the last to arrive, and I found room for him and for his two friends at a small table, in a recess, by an oriel window. Having placed a decanter of sherry, some beer, and a bottle of champagne on the table, I left him to the mercies of the regular house-servants, whose business it was to attend to the feeding department.

But I was not to escape so easily. As I was in the act of 'filling up' one of the gentlemen at my governor's table, this undertaker took a base advantage of a lull in the conversation to fix his eyes on me, and shout 'Waiter!' He was never so nearly getting a champagne bottle at his head in his life. Now, I leave it to a sympathizing reader: Could I possibly have looked like a waiter, in my splendid new breeches, and boots with white tops, and my claret-coloured livery, gold buttons and et ceteras? Then consider the audacity of the brute, to dare to sing out 'Waiter' in a gentleman's dining-room! As the gardener remarked:

'It was very easy to tell where he'd been in the habit of dining for ninepence!'

I felt so upset, what with smothered rage and mortification, that I had to polish off half a bottle of 'red seal' in the hall, before I recovered myself. I vowed that I would expose that man. I have done it, and my wounded dignity is appeased.

But let us peep into the servants'-hall, and see how my friends there are progressing. There is a cold luncheon on the table: cold beef, cold ham, meat pies, roast potatoes, and an unlimited supply of bottled beer. The huntsmen, whips, coachmen and grooms are all hard at it, enjoying themselves quite as well as their masters. I can see at a glance that they do not require me there to 'fill *them* up.'

Luncheon is over, and a rush is made to the yard. Grooms are busy saddling up, and for the next ten minutes there is a great girthing up and shortening of stirrup-leathers, lighting of cigars, and chaff. At last the yard begins to get clear, as by twos and threes the guests depart on their respective pigskins. My master rides Rocket, and his brother is conspicuous on that grand old piece of immortality, Whitefoot. Smoker

carries a novice, but Smoker knows his work, and will carry him over the doubles, if he can only stick on.

The hounds throw off in the front paddock, and the scent takes them round the plantations at the back of the lodge, over three or four flights of rails, round the vineyard at the back of the house, through the lucerne paddock, and over the first double. This is arranged so as to enable the ladies, who have congregated on the top of the tower, to see the first jumps. They watch the career of their friends with the greatest glee, mingled with a certain anxiety for their safety.

'There's Willie! How well he rides! He's coming up to the double! Oh!' (with an inclination to scream)—'Oh, he's down! No, no, he's over! That stupid Rainbow struck the fence! See, he's over again! Well ridden, Willie!'

And Willie rides his best, you may be sure, for he is inspired with the feeling that caused the knights of old to run far more absurd risks than jumping posts and rails.

All goes well until the second or third leaps. The 'take off' is heavy sand, and Rocket comes to grief with my master. The latter is

soon on his legs again, but Rocket objects to being caught.

Smoker, with the novice on his back, is going splendidly. At the first 'double' I see the novice hang on with both hands to the pommel of the saddle, but he lets Smoker have his head and he clears it; but at the second leap he is well on to Smoker's neck. He manages to come in at the finish at any rate, which is more than some of the noble sportsmen do.

It gratified me to see a few harmless spills. It proved to me that I had done my duty, and filled everybody up properly at luncheon-time.

A drag hunt is neither more nor less than a steeplechase, and it takes a good rider and a clever horse to follow it successfully in the Adelaide country. During the season we attended a hunt every Saturday. There is always a luncheon at each meet; and in my opinion it is by no means the worst part of the day's fun. Adelaide Hunt Club, forgive any levity in my remarks, and accept my hearty good wishes for your prosperity.

The hunt is over, but our work in the stable is yet to do. There are horses to strap down, legs

to bandage, traps and harness to wash. When bed-time comes we shall be glad to turn in, and dream that we are flying over timbers on Smokers and Rockets, and 'filling up everybody' all round.

CHAPTER XXI.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE LEVEES—COLONIAL GOVERNORS—THE HONOURABLE MR. ——.—GOOD-BYE TO THE STABLE.

To sit on the box of my carriage and watch the people going to a Government House Levee used to afford me much amusement. Most of the grandees drive to Government House; but the drives are so awkwardly arranged, that carriages have to wait outside the lodge-gates after having deposited visitors at the chief entrance. Gentlemen are requested to attend in uniform, or in evening costume. The latter is not an elegant attire, even by gaslight; but seen beneath the tell-tale rays of a bright Australian sun, it is beyond all absurdity.

At these receptions or levees we see coats of all ages, which look as if they had been through a vast deal of worldly experience. Dress-coats

cannot survive ten or twelve years of dissipation, theatre-going, oyster-suppers, dinner-parties, dances, etc., and look fresh after it, any more than you or I can expect to retain the unwrinkled bloom of our first youth after similar experiences. Most of the dress-suits going to the levee were just such a dissipated-looking lot of old reprobates, and their wearers seemed to be partly acquainted with the fact, as they shuffled along arm-in-arm with what I took to be naval commanders of the last century.

On inquiry I found that this was the Civil Service costume. Any stranger who beheld that old gentleman in this cocked hat, gold-laced swallow-tailed coat and unmentionables, with his sword by his side, and his spectacles well on the bridge of his nose, would probably have remarked that he was very appropriately costumed; providing he was supposed to represent the celebrated Captain Vanslyperken in 'Snarley Yow.'

The young gentlemen in their gorgeous volunteer uniforms were very dashing indeed, and unless you were a close observer you would declare that they were not thinking at all of how nice they looked, and were just as much at home

in martial affairs as ever they were at their desks.

Then there is a curious assortment of old fellows in wigs and gowns, flying about with ladies on their arms. These gallant disciples of the law send me right away back to Chancery Lane, and from there round the corner to a snug little tavern, where one of my big brothers used to take me, and initiate me into the mysteries of devilled kidneys, broils, and 'stout and bitter.'

As these memories recur to me, one of the coachmen on a carriage close by suggests the feasibility of going round to the 'Black Horse' and having a 'pint.' Two or three other coachmen second the notion, and at the risk of our not being there when our masters come out, we drive round and each of us *have* a 'pint.'

Talking about Government House naturally brings to mind governors. There are a good many worse appointments under Government than the governorship of an Australian colony.

The most popular governor that England ever sent out to Australia was Sir Hercules Robinson, Governor of New South Wales. Anybody who has ever read one of his speeches to the boys of

the Sydney College, or of the local schools, cannot help admiring in him those kind and manly traits of disposition that characterise the man of pure and noble thought. As a sportsman he took the lead throughout Australia, and although he never made bets, and discouraged those plagues of every Australian race-course, 'the betting men,' he was an indefatigable and fortunate patron of the turf. There was nothing in the colony too insignificant to be below his notice, nothing too troublesome for him to give his attention to, as long as it was for the ultimate public weal.

The colonies have not always been blessed with such good governors. There have been some most deservedly unpopular ones.

One governor, who was of a parsimonious turn of mind, gave instructions—on his retirement—to an auctioneer to sell off his stable effects. This is the usual course to pursue, unless the in-coming governor agrees to purchase them. Amongst other lots put up, in 'one lot' were his ex-coachman's well-worn livery, including coat, breeches, gloves, and a pair of dilapidated top-boots. This occurred not many years ago, and formed the subject of an excellent squib and caricature in a

comic paper in Australia. The auctioneer was represented as holding up the coachman's 'breeches,' and inviting South Australia to bid for the last relic of his Excellency, ——.

Writing as a coachman, I cannot help feeling indignant at such a gross display of meanness.

South Australia is fortunate in its governors, as a rule. The present Governor, Sir William Jervois, is most popular with all classes, and is not only esteemed for his administration, but also for the soldierly qualities which he displayed, to the reassurance of the Australian Governments in their late anticipations of foreign invasion.

I sometimes recognised an old acquaintance who brought odd recollections to my mind. At one of the levees I saw a familiar face, and, upon inquiry, found it to belong to an old schoolfellow. When I was at Eton, I was travelling from the Paddington Station to Windsor with a boy who, like myself, was returning from town after 'leave of absence.' This boy was my junior, and was perhaps about fifteen years of age. Soon after leaving Paddington, he drew out a cigar-case 'be-monogrammed and be-coroneted.' It be-

longed to his elder brother. He handed it round to the other occupants of the carriage, who seemed to be a party of officers returning to Windsor. Not being at that time broken in to 'smoke,' I felt a good deal surprised at the accomplishments of my schoolfellow. However, he finished his cigar without a wink, and thereupon lighted another. The most sensible one of the young men in the carriage remonstrated with him, but the majority were vastly amused and admired his 'pluck.' He was very indignant with the man who proffered such unasked-for advice. But, alas! after a few whiffs of number two regalia, he grew deadly white, and notwithstanding all his efforts to control his stomach, he was forced to succumb and ignobly hold his head out of the window.

Ten years later! The scene has changed! The Honourable Mr. —— is a lodger in a second-class boarding-house in the colonies. His allowance is £150 per annum. His former schoolfellow is a coachman! But the coachman is pretty jolly after his own style—has an easy conscience and a good digestion. What a pity Mr. —— has that wretched £150 a year! What pleasurable experiences it debars him from!

It does not matter what a man's occupation may be, he cannot live without an occasional difference with one or other of his fellows. No man's temper is perfectly equable, and the philosopher who smiles at a serious reverse in fortune is quite likely to give way to passion at a trifle. Good temper depends in a great measure on the state of one's stomach, circumstances, and the weather.

One Christmas morning our stable-yard was thrown into very serious disorder by the disappearance of two twopenny cucumbers.

Christmas Eve was always kept up in the orthodox style. We decorated the boxes with wreaths of wattle and boughs from the beautiful low green shrubs that grew in the plantation round about the house. Fresh stable-mats were plaited for the stalls, and everything, even to the horses, whose headstalls had each a sprig of green, spoke of Christmas.

On this particular Christmas Eve a supper in the coachman's room concluded the festivities. The gardeners, footmen, etc., were amongst the guests, and six-handed euchre and a few songs helped to pass the time pleasantly. At supper-

time, the appearance of a pair of fowls, a ham, and an unlimited supply of colonial beer by no means threw a wet blanket on our spirits.

On the departure of my guests I congratulated myself that, notwithstanding the profuseness of my hospitality, none of them seemed to be any the worse for liquor. Certainly one of the gardeners had swallowed a surprising quantity of beer, but then his 'capacity' for carrying drink far exceeded that of most men. He walked straight, and wished me good-night in a perfectly coherent manner; and, but for a mischievous twinkle in his eyes, even I, who knew him well, would have pronounced him sober.

Now, my grooms were particularly temperate young fellows, and went straight off to bed, as usual.

The gardener, however, as I afterwards learnt, was just in that state of cunning intoxication that prevented him going home until he had made a careful tour round the premises.

Under the veranda outside the kitchen stood two large safes, in which were stowed all the good things for the Christmas feast.

The cook happened to be an irascible old

Welshwoman, who always resented liberties taken with her department in a forcible and unmistakable manner. She had, unluckily, forgotten to lock one of the safes, and so our gardener helped himself not only to the jam-tarts and 'goodies,' but to the only two cucumbers in the establishment.

Cucumbers are hardly in season in South Australia at Christmas. A few weeks later they are plentiful enough.

Next morning, as we were all hard at work, 'mucking out' the boxes and cleaning horses, we heard Mrs. Ap Jones's voice raised in loud and angry tones. As this was nothing unusual, we proceeded with our work; but in a few minutes the infuriated old woman came striding across the stable-yard.

'So! this is a nice trick inteet, watever, dono voh! A *nice* trick of the stable-poys! So they must take her cucumbers, that's put py for her lunch. Now they can ride over to the village and get two cucumbers at once, or he'll go in straight t' master, and then her'll know the tirty tief.'

'Who took your cucumbers?' cried one of the lads. 'What are you talking about, you old

catawampus? We never touched your rotten cucumbers.'

'That will do, boys,' I exclaimed. 'Don't rile the old lady. I can assure you, Mrs. Ap Jones, that we have had nothing to do with the disappearance of your cucumbers, and we happen to be far too busy to ride about at this time in the morning for your amusement.'

'Then her'll go straight t' master. Her'll see if they can do just as they please, the tamned impident tiefs!'

Very shortly, a message came out from the house, to the effect that my master wished to see me in his bedroom.

Mrs. Ap Jones had accused us of rifling her safes. This I indignantly refuted; but as my master remarked, the cucumbers had gone, so *somebody* had taken them, and they must be replaced. His orders were that I should send one of the grooms over to the village immediately on horseback.

This decision did not please me. It gave Mrs. Jones the best of the day. We had refused to go at her command, and now we were compelled to obey.

On returning to the stable, I saw one of the kennel-men in the yard (we had a large kennel of greyhounds); and the idea struck me, that by sending *him*, we would prevent Mrs. Ap Jones bragging about her victory.

We could say, 'Ah, we did *not* go, you see, after all your complaints *t' master*.'

So I called out to him: 'George, will you take Whitefoot and ride over to the village, and see if you can get a couple of cucumbers? Mrs. Ap Jones was robbed last night, and has been kicking up no end of a row.'

'All right,' replied George, and away he went.

I had misgivings after his departure, because Whitefoot was a very gay old horse and George an indifferent rider. The reason I gave him that horse was that he had not yet been cleaned, and most of the other horses were done.

In about a quarter of an hour Whitefoot returned 'hard held,' and on stopping suddenly at the door of his box nearly sent George over his head. But he had got no cucumbers.

Another message from the house. My master wanted me again in his bedroom.

'I wonder what's up now,' I thought, as I knocked at his door.

'Did I not tell you to send one of the grooms over to the village?' he demanded.

'Yes, sir, but——'

'Then why the deuce did you not do as I told you?'

'Well, sir, we were very busy—Christmas morning you know, sir; and George was doing nothing, so I thought——'

'You *thought!* Well, don't ever think again. When I give you an order, be good enough to execute it. If I say "Send a groom," I do not mean "Send a kennel-man." And another thing—never allow anybody to ride Whitefoot on any pretence whatever. The stable is full of horses, and you send a stupid fool like that on Whitefoot. I wonder he did not get his neck broken. I will *not* have that horse hacked about on messages. In future, exercise him yourself every day. Now you can go.'

'Well, this is a lively Christmas morning!' I exclaimed to the boys. 'All through that wretched old woman and her cucumbers.'

That Christmas Day was not full of goodwill

in the servants' hall. I had to exercise all my influence to prevent an outbreak at meals. The grooms were naturally infuriated, for they at all events were innocent of any sort of misdemeanour.

They had the credit of having eaten the cucumbers throughout the household, and we all went minus our usual Christmas tips and presents. This was galling; but that which was most hard to bear was the victorious manner of Mrs. Ap Jones, and the insulting way in which she triumphed over us.

I have heard it remarked that cucumbers are indigestible. I am certain that no two cucumbers ever remained so long on people's stomachs as those two did.

About a week or ten days after Christmas, Charles, one of the grooms, happened to call at the gardener's house for some eggs. He had nothing to carry the eggs in, and the gardener's wife told him to take a little marketing bag that was hanging on a peg behind the door. Charles took the bag down, remarking, 'There's something in it, Mrs. Adams.'

And sure enough there were *two cucumbers* in

it! somewhat limp and sodden, as if they had been there for a good many days.

'Now I wonder,' said Mrs. Adams, 'where on earth Adams got *them*. He has not cut any in the garden yet, has he, Charles?' Then the Christmas episode suddenly flashed across her mind, and the blood rushed to her face. 'Oh, the mean wretch!' she cried. 'Just to think of his having taken them, and let you poor boys be blamed for it! Well, I never would have believed it of him. I'll never forgive him. Oh, *won't* I give it him when he comes home to dinner!'

The fact was, that Adams was so far gone in his cups that he hid the cucumbers in the bag behind the door, and next morning forgot where he had put them. No doubt he was a moral coward; and when he saw the commotion he had caused, and the bad feeling that existed amongst the servants, he was afraid to own to the theft.

We held a council in the harness-room, and decided on not breathing a word of the matter to a single soul. Adams, who in the main was a thoroughly respectable man and a good fellow-servant, appreciated our silence very much. He never forgot us if there was anything nice to be

obtained in the garden, and we never ceased to chaff him quietly as he passed through the stable-yard. Having borne the blame at the first, and got over the painful feeling of being unjustly censured, we derived much amusement from having the real pith of the joke so entirely to ourselves. Even Mrs. Ap Jones found, to her surprise, that we were no longer to be annoyed by allusions to the cucumbers; and as for Mrs. Adams, she will never forget us to her dying day, for not having '*told about Adams.*'

Taking the life of a groom or a coachman in a good employ as a whole, I do not think that there could be a much pleasanter one for a working man. Horses certainly require constant and unremitting attention. They must be fed and watered at certain hours; they must be well groomed, and their stables kept in that state of cleanliness and good order that is so important to the well-being of the animals.

Then traps and harness are constantly being dirtied; and in busy times, such as at race-meetings, there is plenty of work up to late hours at night, in order to be able to 'turn out' next morning.

But a good groom has his own reward in seeing his brass-mounted harness bright and his horses in good heart. His work shows for itself, and he feels just as proud of a good team as his master. The life of a gentleman's groom is a healthy, clean life, full of daily incident and variety, without care or anxiety.

So my stable life passed away. Race-days, picnics, garden-parties, and archery-meetings; occasionally a night at the opera or theatre—not often, as we did not care about keeping our horses out late. Then, of course, there was the village public-house, in the back parlour of which coachmen and grooms occasionally met at night and discussed stable events over a quiet game of euchre.

I was for the first time in my life quite contented. What want of ambition! Well, I have yet to be convinced that ambition constitutes happiness. When I look back on those three years, my feelings for my employers are those of the most sincere affection and gratitude for the home I found amongst them—the pleasantest resting-place in my nomadic life.

CHAPTER XXII.

BUSH LIFE IN NEW SOUTH WALES—THE STATION MANAGER—BREAKING IN COLTS—SCARCITY OF WATER—COST OF WELLS.

My notes on bush life in Australia refer to the rougher, or what may be termed the back-country, phase of bush life. There are numbers of large stations in Australia, of which the head-quarters are a second edition of an English gentleman's country seat. I know many such stations where the gardens are well kept up, the stables in orthodox trim, and the interior of the house in thorough accordance with the notions of refinement in this nineteenth century.

On such stations 'cattle duffing' and similar abominations are regarded as things of the past, and talked of as we in England talk of Dick

Turpin's exploits. As the country becomes settled, all freebooting spirits retire. Thus there are spots in Australia where a good many men who are 'wanted' manage to enjoy an unmolested freedom.

In these districts there is a considerable lot of 'shaking' carried on. 'Shaking' a horse means appropriating the animal without any lawful right. 'Duffing' is a term used when cattle or horses are illegally branded, or have their brands changed. For instance, a horse branded *P* might by the addition of a stroke, done with a piece of red-hot wire, have his brand changed into *B*, with perhaps an additional brand added. The real owner of the horse sees the animal, and can swear to him in all but the most important part, that is the brand. This is a very common game, and has been carried on successfully for years in many parts.

In such districts 'duffing' cattle is thought rather a smart thing to do; and for a person to declare a want of sympathy for bushrangers is to signify a desire to be immolated on the altar of unpopularity.

My master obtained a situation for me as store-keeper on a station. The station on which I was

located was in New South Wales, and was within four hundred miles of Adelaide.

After my town life, I must confess that I found it very monotonous, and felt the want of society. This may sound absurd after my three years of servitude; but amongst servants I met with plenty of well-informed men who could converse on many other subjects besides their particular work. In the bush I found that any subject except sheep, cattle, or breaking in colts, was regarded as frivolous.

The district that I dwelt in was one of the most unpicturesque that it is possible to conceive, without conjuring up the deserts of Sahara or the plains of Siberia. Miles upon miles of salt bush, which is a low shrub that the sheep feed upon, were mingled with small belts of stunted scrub called 'black oak,' few and far between. A region where running water is unknown, save in the time of floods, and where a dry sandy creek, with a few undersized gum-trees growing in it, is looked upon as an oasis. The ranges were bald rocky hills, not high enough to look imposing, and yet so rough and steep in most parts as to be a nuisance to ride over. On these ranges grew a variety of

stunted growth, such as 'mulgah,' and 'mallee,' in a few places, and gums where the creeks intersected them.

Anything more wretched to the eye of one who appreciates the beauties of Nature cannot well be pictured. The chief game was the rock wallaby, a species of kangaroo, which swarm in the ranges, and hop from rock to rock with the agility of the chamois. Kangaroos and emus were also in great numbers; and kangaroo-hunting on the plains was not at all bad sport. A good 'old man' very often affords an exciting chase; but the horse-flesh you use up in hunting soon makes you regard the amusement as a fraud. The only living-place on the station was a three-roomed 'pug' hut. It was built on the side of a hill, being partially what is termed a 'dug-out.' 'Pug' huts are built of pieces of loose surface stone, and layers of 'pug' are plastered in between; the 'pug' being splodges of clay mixed into a sort of mortar.

When it rains, which it does on an average about once in two or three years, this pug gets washed off. Our hut boasted of no chimney until I, in a moment of desperation, knocked down a

portion of the wall and built one. It was a remarkable chimney, and had sufficient substructure to form the foundation of a small castle. The only other place of abode was another 'dug-out,' which served as the kitchen and men's hut. These are convenient sort of buildings, as they are built in a few days, and the roof is transferable, being of corrugated iron. One objection to them is that they harbour all sorts of vermin, centipedes, scorpions, lizards, blind adders, and sometimes a snake. We killed one of the latter gentlemen inside the store-room one morning. He measured seven feet in length, and was disporting his figure amongst the currants and raisins.

The manager and his wife slept in one of the end rooms. I slept in the other, with the stores, flour, tea, sugar, tobacco, etc. The centre portion of the structure was used as a common dining-room. There were no windows, and only two doors, the latter being, in the usual bush style, made out of brandy-cases.

The manager was a capital hand amongst stock, that is to say, he was a fearless breaker-in of steers and colts, and had the reputation of being a good man on a buck-jumper. As to colts, I should

prefer not having any broken in by him for my own use. His way of proceeding was this. Rope a colt in the yard, and throttle him as nearly as possible without killing him. Having reduced him to a state of semi-insensibility, put on collar, winkers, hames, traces, and rein. Then, having already harnessed a broken-in horse to the near side of the pole, 'shove in' the colt before he knows what is the matter. To hook on his traces, couple him, and 'pole' him up are works of a moment. For a start, lash him up with a Yankee whip, shove at the wheels behind, and yell 'Hey, boys!'

He rears and kicks, but the old buggy has a pole that has been broken before, and is lashed in the middle with whipcord, so it bends like a willow twig. At last away he goes at full gallop over the salt-bush plain—any road, as long as he keeps going—flogged and yelled at at the slightest sign of flagging, and after a ten or twelve mile 'spurt' he is brought home subdued in spirit, if not broken-hearted.

The effect of this 'fly round' is to make that colt for ever timid and awkward to handle. Whenever he is coupled he expects to receive a series of cuts and hear 'Hey, boys!' before even

the traces are fastened. Then if he does not get away at once he probably jibs and refuses to go at all until violent measures are resorted to. That is the way all the horses are ruined in the bush. Saddle-horses are treated in the same way, and if they have no inclination to buck at the first start, it is not very long before some thick-headed clown has taught them the trick.

The only harness used in driving in the bush is 'collar and traces.' Quite sufficient harness too for useful purposes, though our carriage-horses would look very bare if so accoutred.

The ordinary station manager is not altogether a bad sort of fellow. He has a hearty jovial manner, and is hospitable to visitors. He may possibly be a man of some education, and in his earlier days of good associations. In most cases, however, he is of colonial extraction, or nearly so, having arrived at an early age in the colony. He is not refined either in speech or manner, and although he is perhaps a member of the club when in town, and has access to the society of gentlemen, he feels far more at home amongst the rough customers who form the 'station hands.'

After 'shearing' is over he generally goes down

to town; but he never thoroughly appreciates the change. Everything seems far too 'swell' for him, and even the waiters at the club annoy him with the obsequiousness of their behaviour. It is not what he has been used to 'up country,' where Jack is very nearly as good as his master, and he does not feel quite sure that the waiter is not taking a 'rise' out of him. He has also contracted a bad habit of swearing whilst engaged in his pastoral pursuits, and he has to exert a great deal of self-control on this point. Then, in the society of ladies, he is conscious of a certain degree of awkwardness, and begins to fear that there is a want of refinement in the phrases with which he gives vent to his thoughts. And his hands are a grief to him; not that their being sunburnt matters a bit, but there is a knotty look about the knuckles and a coarse stunted appearance in the nails that he never noticed in the bush, but which troubles him dreadfully in town.

When he gets into the smoking-room and can 'talk horse,' he rapidly recovers his equanimity; but the place in town where he really feels at home is in the bar of one of the second-rate hotels.

Up on the station he is quite a different man. He loses all awkwardness of manner, and assumes rather a superiority towards stray town visitors. He is at home. Like the 'sea captain,' he has a stock of yarns which the guests are, in politeness, obliged to listen to. Bush yarns! His delight is to initiate 'new chums'—colonial experiencers—into the roughest side of bush life. They soon learn what 'camping out' means under his guidance, and also how to cook dampers, and get up their own horses in the morning. Should they be rash enough to talk about hunting in the old country, they are not many hours before they are quietly introduced to a buck-jumper. As the manager observes, 'That's the way to take the gas out of them.'

The manager has a great pride in telling you how he can go for two or three whole days without water or food. I cannot say I ever knew one to do it, but I have often heard them assert that they had done it. Their powers of physical endurance constitute their chief conceit. Whenever I went out with one I always paid particular attention to the commissariat department. It may be a blessing to have the

stomach of a camel, but unless compelled to do so I do not intend to try whether I have or no. In all other respects the station manager is a kind, simple-hearted fellow whom it were impossible to dislike. His little bush vanities are nothing when compared to town vices, and his hospitality hides all his failings.

The manager of the station where I lived was not one of the sort I have described. He was an uneducated man, but of above the average bush type. He had risen entirely through his own exertions, and was looked on by bushmen as a smart man.

The want of fresh vegetables is a serious drawback to living in the bush. I had several trials at making gardens, but the scarcity of water frustrated all my attempts.

Our station, if such a hovel could be called a station, was on the banks of one of the sandy 'gum creeks,' common to that part of the country.

In very heavy rains this creek was said to 'run.' I never saw it run, but I believe that it had done so shortly before I came up country.

After these rains there remained a certain

quantity of fresh water in the bed of the creek beneath the sand. This was only soakage, there being no springs to renew the supply. As the hot weather set in and the water became exhausted, we were compelled to shift all the stock, such as working bullocks, horses, etc., to a permanent well about ten miles off.

Water is saved in every possible way in Australia. The commonest method is to sink large tanks in parts of the country where there is a good 'catch' for water. This is generally in the neighbourhood of clay pans. Clay pans are flat bare patches of clay soil, which in time of rain become pools of water. They are as a rule in chains not far apart, and drains are made from one to the other, and so on into the tank. The capacity of these tanks averages from a few thousand up to twenty and thirty thousand yards. Lately there has been a great improvement in tank-sinking. They are sunk by a steam plough and scoop to the depth of twenty-five feet, and the size of eighty yards square. The old-fashioned tank could not be of any great width, as it was sunk with bullocks, and thirty-five yards is about as wide as contractors generally cared to

'scoop' out the dirt. Of course the length did not matter.

Wells are sunk to a great depth in Australia, and are an expensive item in the 'squatter's' yearly expenses. Two pounds a foot is a common price to sink a hundred feet, and after that an additional price is often demanded.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A CHAPTER ON SNAKES AND VERMIN IN GENERAL.

In one of my many idle moments I happened to be looking through a volume of 'Bow Bells'; and I was induced by a sensational engraving to skim through a chapter of a story entitled 'Twenty Straws.'

The scene was in Sydney. The picture represented a snake in the act of twining itself around the arm of a man who was in a semi-recumbent position, whilst another man in a frock-coat, with a stick in his hand, regarded the matter with an air of abstraction with was suggestive of his having been drinking. Dipping into the dialogue:—

'Colonel,' he gasped, '*I am a dead man!*'

'The poison of a carpet-snake is, then, *fatal?*'

'It is death, colonel!' groaned Bothright in reply.

In a very short time Bothright and the colonel (who had also been bitten) were *livid corpses!* Very horrible! but the author of this amusing piece of fiction picked out one of the few Australian snakes that are *not* poisonous.

The carpet-snake, so called from its magnificently striped skin, which resembles the pattern of a brown and drab-coloured carpet, with an irregular bright yellow design, is of the python tribe. I dare say that there are specimens in the Zoological Gardens. It crushes its prey like the boa; but its chief food consists of lizards, rats and mice, or an occasional rock wallaby. I dare say it would not turn up its nose at a nice young lamb.

One was killed on the Barrier Ranges in New South Wales that measured fifteen feet, and was as thick in the middle as a man's thigh. Carpet-snakes are seldom killed under seven or eight feet in length, and in the northern territory of Australia they frequently attain the huge size of twenty feet.

The one that was killed on the Barrier was in

an old hut in the bed of a 'gum creek' that wound its way out of the ranges on to the plain.

It was a very hot day in the height of summer, and two men, who were horse-hunting, camped in the shade of the gums for an hour or two to 'spell' their horses and boil a 'quart-pot of tea.' One of the men went up the creek to an old well about half a mile distant to fill the 'billy,' whilst the other remained to light the fire and hobble out the horses. The one who remained behind looked into the old hut, which had been the habitation of a shepherd in former days. He found some loose leaves of a book on the floor, and finding the atmosphere cooler inside than out, he sat down on an old stool and was soon deep in his reading. He was disturbed by a rustling sound, and on looking up beheld what he at first believed to be half a dozen snakes coiled in and out of the dilapidated slabs which formed the sides of the hut.

That man was out of the hut 'like a shot!' When his mate returned from the well, the two men armed themselves with long sticks and commenced the attack. After a quarter of an hour's sharp battle they despatched his lordship. He

was uncommonly hard to kill. They hung him up in the bough of a tree and measured him with their stock-whips.

The carpet-snake is considered a great delicacy by the blacks, and also by many bushmen, whose tastes are in many respects not very dissimilar. It would no doubt inflict a nasty bite; but it has no poison gland, and kills large prey by crushing it. I knew of one that was drawn out of its hole head first by a young fellow with a pair of blacksmith's pincers. This young man was a well-sinker, and had 'strong and sinewy arms.' He was carrying the pincers out to the camp where he and his mates worked. He saw the snake going into the hole, and thrust the pincers in after him. The snake turned in the hole and the well-sinker laid hold of him by the nose, and drew him out. He held tight on to his nose you may depend. The snake coiled around the tongs or pincers, and then around the bare arm of the man. In this position he was carried a mile and a half. When the 'boys' saw their mate walking up with his prize they hastened to release him. But they found it no easy matter. It took three men to unwind that snake; and when he

was unwound the man had lost the use of his arm. For several days the muscles were quite paralyzed; and where the snake had hugged him the whole of the skin peeled off. Two or three weeks elapsed before he recovered the full use of the limb.

The big brown snake with the yellow belly is very poisonous, and is the most common of Australian reptiles. His length is from three to eight or nine feet. I have killed these snakes out on a plain twenty miles from any known water. Yet it is well known that snakes cannot exist long without water, save when in a dormant state.

The deaf adder is a very dangerous snake of no great size, but unduly thick in proportion to its length. It is not more than two feet long. The deaf adder, or death adder as some people miscall it, frequents the sandy coasts, where you might happen to tread on it, thinking it to be a stick or piece of seaweed. It has a sting in its tail that it raises and strikes with. A friend of mine had a fox-terrier stung by one. The dog died in convulsions in ten minutes.

The whip-snake is a very deadly species too;

so also is the tiger-snake, which is more common in Victoria than elsewhere.

The worst of all snakes, however, to my thinking, is the black snake. He is generally about three or four feet long, and is never far away from water. He lives in pools and muddy swamps. but is not particular as long as he can get a swim. I hauled one up in a bucket once from the bottom of a well. He was coiled round the rope. When I saw him I was in the act of stretching my hand out for the bucket. I let go the windlass, and nearly went down the well after the bucket. When I recovered my self-possession I hauled up again, and finding the snake in the same position, soon knocked him out of shape. Bites from black snakes are almost certain death, and these reptiles are the more objectionable as they might give one a nip when luxuriating in the pleasures of the bath.

The old way in which snake-bites were treated was to tie a string above the bitten part, suck out the poison and cauterize or cut away with a knife the surrounding flesh. The latest and most successful treatment is to inject ammonia, and give a teaspoonful of spirit of ammonia or

eau de luce in water every ten minutes. The sufferer should also be kept walking about, and on no account allowed to rest until the effect of the poison has worked off. Plenty of brandy may also be given.

The variety of lizards in Australia is very great. The iguana is common in all parts, but in the northern districts it attains a great size. It is easily killed, but it is capable of inflicting a nasty bite. I watched two iguanas fighting one day, and the savage snaps they made at each other were audible at some distance. The fat inside of the iguana makes an excellent dressing for leather, saddles, bridles, whips, etc.

I brought one into camp one day, intending to grease my gaiters; but directly the men saw him hanging on my saddle they begged me to give it to them for dinner. As there were fresh chops grilling on the coals, I did not see why they should be so eager for the disgusting-looking creature. However, they threw it on the coals, unscraped and uncleaned, and devoured every morsel in preference to the chops. Had I been in a state of absolute hunger, and unable to procure anything better, no doubt I should have been glad of

it, but I fail to see anything admirable in a man being able to devour a reptile of that description without the plea of necessity. It is a part of a bushman's conceit to affect to relish such meals, and revel in other disgusting habits, thinking thereby to excite the astonishment and envy of less accomplished individuals.

Tarantula spiders, scorpions, centipedes and a hundred varieties of ants abound in every up-country district. The scorpion is very poisonous, so are the centipede and the big tarantula. I have known a man bitten by a scorpion nearly die from the effects of the bite. A great deal depends on the state of health of the person at the time that he is bitten. Of ants there are many vicious varieties. The 'bull-dog' ant and the 'soldier' are about on a par as regards venom. I was bitten once by a 'soldier,' and for ten minutes was in frightful agony. I believe three or four would kill a man. After I was bitten I never forgot to put a fire-stick down every 'bull-dog' or 'soldier's' nest that I saw. I have the satisfaction of knowing that I avenged myself by exterminating a good many thousands of these plagues.

When camping out, especially if you camp after

dark, it is impossible to tell whether there is a nest of ants near you. On many occasions I have discovered one a few yards from our blankets the next morning. If seen at night, the best way is to light a fire over the top of the little mound that forms the nest, and so drive the inhabitants into the ground.

It is a wonderful thing, considering how full of venomous reptile and insect life Australia is, that so very few people are bitten. A snake will always keep out of a man's way if he possibly can. It is only when asleep, and suddenly surprised—trodden on, or intercepted from entering his hole—that a snake will attack a man. In the months of January and February, when the nights are hotter even than the days—or seem to be so—snakes lie about at night. This is a most unsatisfactory part of their behaviour, as January and February are the very months when you prefer to lie outside at night yourself, to sleeping indoors.

For information respecting the birds of Australia I cannot do better than refer the reader to the interesting work written on that subject by Mr. Gould. Australia boasts of an immense variety of birds, many of which are peculiar to the con-

tinent. The marsupials are also a large tribe, and are represented by a hundred different species, from the 'old man' kangaroo, who stands seven feet in height, to the delicate and beautifully-formed little kangaroo mouse, or the equally pretty feather-tailed mouse, both wee specimens of the kangaroo genus.

The wombat is an uninteresting-looking beast of a burrowing nature. Whether he is of a pig tribe or an underground bear tribe, or has a tribe of his own, I cannot say.

We had one on board once coming from Australia. To judge by his performances he possessed remarkable intelligence. He was found on three distinct occasions in the cabin of an old maid who was a saloon passenger. If that wombat walked along the main deck, eluded the vigilance of the stewards, and picked out the old lady's particular berth on each occasion, I maintain that he showed remarkable sagacity; I am, however, under the impression that some volatile young gentleman directed the wombat in his peregrinations.

Vast quantities of parrots are brought from the colonies, and if landed with moderate losses are a

very profitable cargo. The birds are, however, as a rule overcrowded and insufficiently attended to. Their cages are allowed to get foul, and an epidemic breaks out amongst them that resembles typhoid fever. The birds then die by hundreds.

To land parrots safely is an easy matter if a little trouble is taken in the first instance, and they are kept clean on the voyage. Their cages should have a false wire bottom, and a slide beneath covered with zinc which can be removed and cleaned daily. A flat tin dish, too, should be placed in their cage for a bath—say two inches in depth—besides their drinking jars, which should be hooked on to the side of the cage, so as to be less likely fouled by the birds. All parrots are by nature exceedingly clean and fond of the bath; and if carried in such cages, and not overcrowded, they would pay the speculation far better than by carrying great numbers and losing two-thirds of them.

CHAPTER XXIV.

BUSHRANGERS—THE KELLYS—CATTLE-DROVING—A DOUBLE SUICIDE—THE AUSTRALIAN HORSE.

PEOPLE who have not been up in the back country would be rather surprised at the notions of *meum* and *tuum* there indulged in. A horse was taken off our run, and ridden into a township about two hundred miles off. It was there sold. The first intelligence which we received of the matter was that the horse had turned up in our country with another brand on him in addition to the brand he bore originally. This brand was recognised as that of a publican who resided in the far-off township. He was written to, and replied by letter that the horse had been sold to him by a well-known colt-breaker. The colt-breaker was communicated with, but refused to give the real owner of the horse any satisfaction.

When told that the owner intended to prosecute him, he remarked:

'No fear; it is more than he dare do, for I happen to know a thing or two about him.'

This knowing 'a thing or two' about each other was the general state of society in that part of the bush, and assisted to keep up a very pleasant system of 'cattle-duffing' and free-bootery.

Bushrangers have generally commenced their career through being 'wanted' for horse or cattle stealing, and the immense sympathy which they command amongst their bush friends can well be compared to the good understanding that exists between the Greek or Italian brigand and the peasantry of those countries.

To this sympathy is attributable the real secret of the bushranger's being able so successfully to defy the efforts of the police.

The success with which the Kelly gang has hitherto baffled the Victoria Police has been a theme for universal astonishment throughout the colonies. Mansfield, the town near which the Kellys lived, is only one hundred and twenty miles from Melbourne; but the Strathbogie

Ranges, which are adjacent, afford a natural and secure shelter for such desperadoes. The mountains are precipitous, and intersected with ravines and rocky gullies of great depth, more picturesque than inviting to the traveller. These mountains are thickly timbered, and contain caves and hiding-places in their recesses which seem intended by nature for the abode of outlaws.

Notwithstanding all these natural advantages of shelter, it is an extraordinary thing that four men, upon whose heads there has been put the immense sum of 'Eight Thousand Pounds Reward,' should have been able so long to defy the Victorian Government, and act on the aggressive in spite of the one hundred and fifty troopers supposed to be in hot pursuit of them. Before the Kellys fully attained their unenviable notoriety, the police had been assiduous in their attentions to them. The family were in bad repute, and had been in trouble on various occasions. Dan Kelly, the youngest brother, had undergone a sentence for horse-stealing or something of that sort, and had wounded a trooper who was sent to arrest him. Edward Kelly, who, notwithstanding his besieged condition in

the ranges, has found means to communicate freely with the public, asserts that his family have been systematically persecuted by the police for years.

However this may be, it happened that both the Kellys were 'wanted' one fine morning; but instead of remaining at home to be quietly arrested, they looked up their revolvers, saddled their horses, and having strengthened their number with two other gentlemen who were in a somewhat similar social predicament, took to the bush. Four troopers were sent out to capture them. The troopers were camped one evening, and were preparing their supper, when the Kellys suddenly surprised them, and ordered them to 'bail up.' They ran, instead, for their revolvers, and three of them were instantly shot down. The fourth escaped by a miracle—and jumping on a horse that was tied up to a bush, got away.

Sergeant Kennedy did not die instantly, but as he was mortally wounded to all appearances, Dan Kelly, being young and tender-hearted, placed the muzzle of his gun to his breast and finished him. Dan explained afterwards that he did this last act of kindness from the purest motives of

humanity. This was the commencement of the Kelly career.

A few weeks afterwards, when the whole district was being scoured by police, and the papers were driving a roaring trade, flaming with sensational telegrams, such as, 'Sergeant Mac-Korkleg has at last fallen on the camp of the Kellys, with the undeniable remains of a fire not above a week old'—the Kellys calmly rode into the important township of Euroa, having first cut all the telegraph wires, and 'stuck up' the bank.

Earlier in the day they had 'stuck up' a sheep station, not many miles from Euroa, and compelled all hands to remain in an apartment under a guard, whilst the other three went into town. At Euroa they took all the gold, notes, etc., and made the manager of the bank drive them out in his trap to the sheep station, with the 'specie' tied up in bags, and placed on the bottom of the conveyance.

All the country banks now took alarm, and managers and accountants had revolvers served out to them. The police were, as per usual, reported to be vigorously employed in hunting the Kellys, and people looked anxiously for the bulletins

issued in the 'dailies.' But within two months of the 'sticking up' of Euroa, the Kellys made another raid on the township of Jerilderie. Here they commenced with the police station, and without any trouble put the troopers—four in number—into durance vile.

They then, having donned the uniforms of the troopers, paraded the town, and 'stuck up' the bank. There was not the slightest opposition on the part of either manager or assistants. Having secured all the cash, they visited the principal hotel, 'shouting' and paying for their drinks in the orthodox bush style. Altogether, it was rather a gala day for the publicans. Ned Kelly made a speech in the bar of one hotel to an admiring crowd, in which he exonerated himself from the imputation of murder, asserting that if he had not shot the troopers, the troopers would very likely have shot him. This is bush logic, and is accepted by bushmen as a very fair way of reasoning, because, as they argue, 'Darn it all! policemen don't count, no more than a blackfellow; and, after all, the Kellys have only shot policemen.'

Neither at the 'sticking up' of Euroa or

Jerilderie did the Kellys injure anybody. But then nobody offered any resistance. If they had, some people might have been shot who perchance did *not* happen to be policemen. Certainly, the doing so would have tarnished the brilliant Kelly reputation and damaged their colonial popularity.

The harm done to the present youthful generation of the Australian colonies by the unchequered success of these men is incalculable, and the evil now being sown will yield an immense crop of crime hereafter. Since the Kellys have become celebrities, nearly a dozen cases of bush-ranging have occurred, some of most serious moment, in which valuable life has been lost. Still the Kellys are at large! To cover themselves, the Victorian Police are said to circulate rumours to the effect that the Kellys have got 'out of the colony.' The last bulletin was, that they had started farming in California !*

Amongst other bush experiences, I had a five weeks' trip down country with a mob of cattle. The man in charge of them had been cattle-droving nearly all his life, and was a very respectable sort of fellow. He was far above the average

* Since this was written the gang have been destroyed.

bushman in intelligence, and understood other things besides 'cutting out' bullocks, and 'picking up' tracks.

The other men did not resemble him, and although few people could be less fastidious in such matters than myself, I must confess that their constant society sickened me.

Droving is very wearisome work. At daylight the cattle are started off camp. We had three hundred and forty head. The man in charge generally takes them off camp, assisted by two men who have already breakfasted. The cook and another man remain behind at the camp, roll up the swags, put away everything that is left about, place the packs on the horses, and 'unhobble' the spare horses; then, having perhaps made some cakes in the ashes of last night's fire, follow up the tracks of the cattle. On coming up with the cattle, it is about time to camp for their mid-day rest. The cattle have been feeding along quietly, at the rate of about a mile and a half an hour. In the middle of the day they are used to rest, and the men take this opportunity of having dinner. The 'swags' are taken off the pack-horses, and all the horses are 'hobbled out'

again. All the meals are of the same description, salt beef, 'damper,' and tea.

After an hour or so, the cattle travel on again until about sundown. The cook goes on ahead with the man in charge, who chooses his camp for the night. The cook and one of the men then set to and collect sufficient wood to keep up a good fire during the night. In making a fire which you wish to burn all night, it is as well to know that one large log is worth a great many small ones. With cattle you require to keep a bright fire, if possible. They are quieter and more contented if they see a good blaze throughout the night, though, when riding round them, it often dazzles you, especially when having just left the fire. When the cattle come on to camp, they begin to settle quietly down, and one of the men keeps a 'dog watch,' whilst the rest get their supper. The night-watch horse has been saddled, and has eleven hours before him.

The watches are divided into about two hours and three-quarters for each man. Every fifth night one man has all night in. By the time a pipe has been smoked the men are all fast asleep, coiled up in their blankets, with their feet

to the fire. Only the man on watch is wide awake, and he continues to walk his horse slowly around the cattle, whistling and humming the while, so as to let them know that he is coming. This is a good plan, so as not to startle any beast, for if one bullock takes alarm, the probability is that a stampede ensues.

Occasionally there is a restless bullock that gets up to walk to some bush for a scratch. When the man on watch rides round, he quietly puts him in again amongst his companions, for if he is allowed to remain out of the mob, he will soon entice a number of other bullocks out also.

Now and then the man on watch will stop at the fire for a few minutes to warm himself or light his pipe. When his time is up he wakes the next man. Having told him how the 'cattle are camping,' he kicks off his boots, rolls up in his blanket, and is asleep as soon as he lays his head on his saddle.

The hardiness and vitality of the Australian bush-horse is remarkable and noteworthy. On my way down to Adelaide with the cattle I rode a very little bay mare, as well a paced hack as ever I rode either in England or the colonies.

She was springing with foal when we started, but circumstances obliged me to take her. Of course I spared her as much as possible. When we were ten days on the road, the poor little beast had so evidently nearly reached her time that I let her run with the pack-horses, and borrowed a hack from one of the drovers. Next morning the cook, whose duty it was to 'get up' the horses, informed me that my mare had foaled. I found her amongst the scrub, and she, evidently delighted to see me, 'whinnied' as she showed me her pretty foal with maternal delight.

Oh, what a Judas I felt as I caressed her with one hand, gripping with the other the haft of my sheath-knife wherewith to slay her offspring. The poor little beggar came shuffling up to me and poked his nose into my pocket. Determined to do quickly that which had to be done, I felled him with a blow from my 'waddy,' and then *cut his throat*. Returning to camp, leading the reluctant mother with a hand red with her first-born's blood, I realized all the remorseful sensations of a Herod.

For a few days I milked her, taking care not to take more from her than just relieved her. By

this method the milk speedily dried up. In three days I rode her again, and she was as gay if not quite as strong as ever. By the time we reached our journey's end she had picked up wonderfully in condition, and had evidently forgotten all about the little tragedy.

The part of the country where this mare foaled was out of all beaten tracks, and three hundred and fifty miles from Adelaide. If she had been left she would have most likely perished from want of water. Of course the foal could not have travelled with us. Even if the mare had found water it was highly improbable that I should ever see her again, as she would have been appropriated by some traveller hard up for a horse. Thus there was no choice but that of killing the foal. *Necessitas non habet leges!* The fact of a mare foaling—travelling on next day—being ridden in three days' time—fed on nothing but what she could pick up in 'hobbles,' and improving daily in condition, speaks volumes for the climate, and the endurance of the Australian horse.

With a few decent companions cattle-droving would be an endurable life. We did not travel so comfortably as many cattle-drovers do. We

had pack-horses, which is a Queensland fashion. With pack-horses it is impossible to carry very much beyond the bare necessaries of life. Most drovers nowadays take a buggy or light cart, and carry a few cooking utensils, etc.

All the way down to Adelaide from the Barrier Ranges we had no occasion to pitch the tent except once, although it was midwinter. It is wonderful what an appetite a man has when he is living in the open air without stimulants of any sort. Notwithstanding the coarseness of the food and a particularly dirty cook, my appetite was ravenous the whole journey. Our cook was a regular Queensland cattle man, from the Bulloo River. He had not changed his clothes for seven weeks, and was in the habit of putting away the remains of our meals in the pack-bags, with a variety of other articles, such as old combs, boots, hobbles, and dirty socks. Very disgusting to relate, but a fact.

When the cattle got within a hundred miles of Adelaide the fences commenced. Hitherto it had been all plain sailing, and there had been no great difficulty in obtaining food and water for the mob. The cockatoos, as the small farmers in Australia

are termed, have a great dislike to seeing a mob of cattle pass by. Their farms are very badly fenced, often having only one wire, and in many places an old rail is lashed across a gap. As the cattle have to pass through these farms in narrow lanes, they are continually making excursions into the tempting crops of wheat, oats, barley, etc.

Most of the cockatoo farmers in South Australia are Germans. They are wonderfully good colonists; industrious, thrifty, and popular with all classes. Sometimes about a dozen of our bullocks would push through the fence into a garden or wheat crop, and a man would follow in hot pursuit, on horseback, to get them out.

An old Deutscher, pitch-fork in hand, would quickly put in an appearance, swearing that he would annihilate every 'Verdamter Englischer hund,' and yelling out, 'Ach! dam! vas ist dein master's name? Who he vas, eh? Mein Gott, but I make him pay dro de shnout for dis! Vy don't you go dro de gap, du pig? Gott in Himmel, dat beast has took away all mein fences on his horns!'

The fences were so rotten that a bullock, when being 'rushed' out of a field, often took about a

hundred yards of wire and a few posts with him. I was hunting a beast out of a field one day, and put my coat on the wire to jump my mare over. She was a clever little animal, and took the wire easily. When I had put the bullock out of the crop, I tried to jump her back again. She refused, so I took her at it again. She struck the wire, and we both came to grief in the road. It is a stupid thing ever to jump wire. It is more than stupid to take a horse a second time at it, after its having refused.

Some of the South Australian townships are exceedingly pretty; and all those that we passed through were in rich farming districts. South Australia well deserves its name of the 'Granary of the Southern Hemisphere.'

We passed through the town of Gawler on our way down to Adelaide. This town is in size and population the second in the colony. A few days before we arrived at Gawler there had been a sensational double suicide, which had the merit of being out of the general run of suicides. Two friends, both young men, lived together in a cottage in Gawler. They had been unfortunate in business matters, and were neither of them in a

happy frame of mind. They agreed to quit the world in company, and one of them tried bleeding by way of experiment. He did not much like it, so they mutually agreed on hanging as the speediest and pleasantest method of departure. They went down into a cellar, threw a cord over a beam, adjusted the nooses around each other's necks, kicked away the brandy-cases on which they stood, and with a cry of 'Ready, old boy! Away you go, then!' or something of that sort, the trick was done!

When found they were hanging face to face. They were evidently men who agreed on every point, and as nothing is more likely to tire one of existence than to be everlastingly in the society of people who agree with you persistently, I suppose that was the real secret of their *ennui*.

After camping out for five or six weeks, and living on rough diet, the pleasure of finding yourself in clean sheets and a soft bed is a sensation that requires to be experienced before it is properly understood.

CHAPTER XXV.

'GROG SHANTIES.'

THE greatest curse of the Australian bush is the number of licensed and unlicensed dens into which bushmen are enticed, robbed of their money, and in a very short space of time rendered fit subjects for the madhouse. I am inclined to think that it is an evil not easily to be overcome, and that time and the gradual settlement of the country will alone effect any improvement in it. Any person who wishes to become a freeholder in New South Wales has only to select his forty acres, or six hundred and forty if he pleases, and pay down a certain percentage. For forty acres it is required that the selector should pay ten pounds down, and thirty pounds at the end of three years. The balance of purchase-money can, however, remain

unpaid so long as the selector pays interest to the Government at the rate of five per cent. He is required, moreover, to make forty pounds' worth of improvements on his selection, and to reside on it during the first three years. It then becomes his freehold property.

This law of free selection was made with a view of benefiting the farmer, but in the back-country districts it has been freely taken advantage of by the grog-seller. Some of the very worst of 'grog-shanties' have come under my notice. I will describe the worst. The best are bad enough, and they are in the minority.

Suppose a man to have saved two or three hundred pounds by bullock-driving or other legitimate work. He looks about for an investment, and decides on starting a public-house as the easiest and quickest way of making a fortune. He accordingly picks out some place where he knows there is water to be obtained, and which is a convenient stopping-place for the wool-teams. Most likely there are three or four stations within a radius of sixty or seventy miles, and he calculates that every man on those stations will be regular customers. He calls them his *bullocks*, a term

used up country for men who work hard for the benefit of the publican.

Having selected his forty acres, and paid down ten pounds to the magistrate of the nearest township, he proceeds to erect a 'shanty.' The law requires that there shall be two bedrooms and two living-rooms, besides a bar and kitchen, to constitute a fit and proper 'bush house.' To build these six rooms will take six months at the least, in the way in which our shanty-keeper intends to build them. He has no intention of paying cash to the contractors who undertake the job. They will not only drink all their earnings, but be considerably in debt before they have finished. So the shanty-keeper commences business at once, in a hut put up for the time being. His not having a license does not trouble him. There is only one trooper within fifty miles of him in one direction, and no troopers at all in any other. Besides, troopers do not care about making themselves too officious. They have plenty to do to mind their own little horse-dealings and cattle-jobbings without interfering in such matters as selling grog without a license. To interfere in a case of that sort would endanger their popularity,

and perhaps lose them many a good bargain. The first load of grog is got up from the township, and judiciously made into six or seven loads by degrees. Burnt sugar, tobacco, raisins, barley, and boiling water have the effect of making one gallon of rum into at least six gallons, and spirits of wine brings it up to proof in a wonderful manner. Certainly a good judge of Old Jamaica might be a little puzzled about the 'brew,' but it makes men drunk, and, once drunk, they might as well drink that as the best. So argues the shanty-keeper, and for the better class of customers, such as an occasional overseer or store-keeper, he keeps a few cases of good bottled brandy.

When the stone or slab walls of the six-roomed house are finished and roofed in with sheets of iron or bark, the furniture is made. This does not take long. In the best bedroom there are two stretchers, on which are mattresses made out of old wool-bales and stuffed with the straw out of porter-cases. Two gin-cases form a dressing-table. On them is spread a piece of calico, and resting against the slabs is a cracked looking-glass without a frame, to look into which would persuade the

nervous traveller that he was seized with facial paralysis.

The dining-room furniture consists of a long table covered with strips of oilcloth and a fixed form on either side of it. All the furniture is of the fixture description, the legs of the table, etc., being driven into the earth, which forms at once the floor and carpeting of the establishment. The best sitting-room has a fireplace in it, and a few brandy-cases which represent the drawing-room chairs. The bar is built of gin and brandy cases, artfully covered on the top with sheets of zinc. The inside walls of the house are roughly plastered over with mud, and the windows are all of calico. Taking the establishment as a whole, it is more for use than ornament, and if one were to call in a valuer, he would be much perplexed with what fixings to commence.

Let us go into the bar. The front door is a sheet of corrugated iron, and the floor is about a foot lower than the ground outside. A square hole in the wall on one side, with a piece of calico over it, admits a yellowish light. Behind the bar stands a beetle-browed hang-dog-looking ruffian who addresses you on entering with fawning civility. He

has a foreign accent, and it is impossible to decide whether he is a German or a Swede—we put him down for a compound of the two. He is in a dirty flannel shirt, which being open at the throat, affords one an excellent view of an unwashed person. His shaggy matted hair, his eyebrows, moustache and beard—on the latter of which grog drippings are disgustingly visible—all seem to be conjoined. Then as his bleared eyes cunningly take stock of us, we can see in their bloodshot whites the effects of his last night's dissipation, and his many morning 'revivers.'

In front of him, on the grog-besmeared bar, stand five or six filthy glasses. On asking him if he has anything fit to drink, he informs us with a leer that he has some real good bottled brandy. He takes up some of the glasses in his grimy paw, and rinses them in a little tub. He then proceeds to wipe them with a towel which, even if our eyes deceive us, our noses would pronounce foul at the distance of ten yards.

Sitting on the bar, or leaning up against it, are half a dozen station-hands, all more or less in various stages of inebriety. On the floor and on a rude wooden bench are stretched some more

wretched creatures entirely unconscious. A glance convinces us that they have not had a wash for the week or two that they have been 'on the spree.' One of the least intoxicated salutes us:

'Yer goin' to hev a drink, mister? S'cuse me; no offence. Here, fill these glasses up again, darn yer! and take it out of that; d'ye see?'

Herewith he flings down a one-pound note, receiving a few shillings change in return. Grog is one shilling per nobbler at this 'bazaar,' and it is an understood thing that a man with money 'shouts all round' every time, including the landlord.

The shanty-keeper now produces the dice-box and proposes a 'shackle.' It is noticeable that those men whose credit is on the wane are fortunate, whilst the one or two whose cheques are yet 'unmelted' are put in for it.

Meals are not charged for in the bush shanty, unless it is to the stray traveller by the coach which passes once a fortnight. To look into the dining-room whilst these men are at their meals would be an unnecessary and disgusting journey. We will not undertake it.

The shanty-keeper is not, as a rule, a bachelor. When he finds business is going ahead and he has obtained a license for his house, he takes unto himself—well, a female companion. She has had a vast and varied experience in her five-and-thirty years of life, and has had husbands of all sorts; so if she does not know how to manage one by this time, she ought to. Many a time the shanty-keeper has a cut face or a black eye which might possibly be accounted for by her having applied the heel of her boot to his interesting visage as he lay in one of his daily stupors.

'Oh, you will, will you? you drunken pig!' and whack! down comes the boot. 'Bring a respectable woman up into this beastly hole to be insulted, will you? Oh, you dog!' Whack!

Thoroughly aroused at last, up jumps the shanty-keeper in self-defence. Away runs the virago, screaming out that he is going to murder her! Her cries bring three or four drunken men from the bar. They pitch into the shanty-keeper, and finally kick him out of his own house. Two or three more loafers whose credit is shaky rush to the assistance of their patron. A free fight

ensues, during which bottles and glasses fly in every direction. The bar of gin-cases is smashed up, and the she-devil who raised the row flies in terror to the back of the house.

Suddenly there is a lull in the storm. The shanty-keeper, when first introduced, was not a pleasant picture to contemplate. He now presents a woeful appearance. His naturally repulsive features are swollen and cut about; a gash from his eye extends across his left cheek; there is an apparent absence of the other eye altogether; his flannel and trousers are his only garments, and they hang about him in shreds.

Spitting the blood from his now semi-toothless jaws, he staggers up to where the bar *was*, and mutters to the loafer who is picking up the debris:

'Gimme a drink!'

The day after the disturbance, as we ride past the shanty, we call to leave our mail-bags and inquire whether any deaths have occurred.

The shanty-keeper is in a state of plaster and bandage; but for all that, he is shaking the dice-box as usual, and everything is going 'as merry as marriage-bells.'

The missus is beaming with smiles and good-nature. It is from her sweet mouth that we hear the only allusion to the fracas:

'Little bit of breeze yesterday,' we remark.

'Oh, indeed yes!' she replies. 'It is really quite too disgraceful of George to go on like that. If he does get a little drunk it does so upset him! It really makes me quite unhappy at times!'

'Oh, you false creature! where *do* you expect to go to?' That is only what we think to ourselves.

These rows and free fights are not occasional affairs. They are daily occurrences during shearing-time when cheques are plentiful; bi-weekly, at least, all the rest of the year. There is no law exercised to restrain men doing as they please; and the grog sold in such places is enough to madden the most amiable of them. I have not exaggerated what I have described, as any old bushman will own; but, on the other hand, I have painted the pictures in as delicate colours as possible, lest my reader's sense of what is nice should be offended.

I have seen men on their way down to town

with sixty or seventy pounds in their pockets, and perhaps a couple of horses each. They are persuaded to stop the night at one of these 'bush traps,' although they started on their journey with a full determination of not 'tasting' until they reached their destination. In the morning they awake with a headache, and are recommended a 'nobbler' to 'put them square.' They are coaxed on to have more, until at last they have no desire to pursue their journey. They are then, in bush parlance, 'properly on the spree.' When they have drunk all their money, which they manage to do in about a week, they proceed to drink their horses, saddles and bridles, or what is supposed to represent their value. When they are 'swamped' they receive the cold shoulder, and at length take their departure on foot, with a heavy heart, a sick stomach, and a bottle of rum; the latter being a last proof of the 'shanty-keeper's' inexhaustible good-nature.

It is a common idea, even in Australia, that to send a young fellow up into the bush is to send him away from all temptations. If he has been wild in town, it is recommended as an infallible cure. There is no greater mistake. There is

fifty times more drinking in the bush than in town: a worse sort of drinking—a depraved sottish way of swallowing large quantities of alcohol in the shortest possible time.

Everybody drinks; even the station-managers and overseers have their occasional 'bursts.' They do it more quietly as a rule; not always, for I have seen men in good positions in the bush making as great beasts of themselves in the bars of these 'shanties' as any of the shepherds or station-hands.

Men in the bush frequently keep away from the 'grog' for six or nine months, and refuse every invitation to drink. Suddenly they 'break out,' and from being quiet sort of individuals, are immediately transformed into raving maniacs.

There is a belief among all classes in the bush that a 'periodical drunk' counteracts the evil effect of living so much on animal without sufficient vegetable food.

An old shepherd came into the station one day and informed the manager that he wished to give up his flock. The manager asked him his reason. He replied that he was not very well; that his

skin was breaking out in sores. The manager recommended Holloway's pills and ointment—the common bush remedy for all complaints, and a very good one in most cases. The old shepherd smiled and replied :

'Lor' bless yer, sir, I've tried them, and all sorts of pills. They never do me no good. Nothing does me like a good week's "burst," mister ; so I'll just trouble you for a cheque.'

The old wretch started off for the first 'shanty,' cheque in hand. He was welcomed with open arms. In less than an hour he was hopelessly drunk. In less than a week his cheque was done. He returned to the station very shaky in body, but unshaken in his belief that, as an alterative for the system, 'you couldn't beat a good week's "burst."'

In South Australia there are no 'bush shanties' like those in New South Wales. There are accommodation houses, unlicensed ; but at which the traveller can obtain alcoholic refreshment, at the rate of one shilling per 'nobbler,' by giving the proprietor the wink, and asking him for a stick of tobacco.

To suggest any cure for this state of things in

the unsettled districts would be absurd; but it is as well that people should be made aware of the fact, that the youth who gives way to drink can gratify his craving as well in central Australia as in a London gin-palace.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BUSH LIFE—PROS AND CONS.

THERE are two sides to every question; and much might be said both in favour of a bush life, and *vice versâ*. I think a great deal depends on whether it turns out a satisfactory monetary speculation. If a man is making money he is content with very many annoyances in life that otherwise he would not endure.

The healthy active life in the bush compensates in great measure for the want of society and rough style of living; and no one can properly appreciate the luxury of cities until he has experienced a few years' banishment in the back country. Still, when one is in the bush, there is always a hankering for civilization. Perhaps some men are not so troubled, but I know that I was; and I do not believe I should ever get over

the complaint known up-country as 'town-sickness.' I love my fellow species too well ever to become a willing hermit. But I will look on the question both pro and con., leaving it to my reader to decide.

1. To camp out under the canopy of heaven, lie by your log fire, and drop off to sleep to the music of the bells of hobbled horses, is romantic and pleasant; but to discover that you have camped within a yard of a 'bull-dog' ants' nest, to have a centipede crawl up your leg, be bitten on the toe by a scorpion, or find a snake under your head in the night, banishes all pleasure and romance.

2. Riding day after day in a picturesque country, on a good horse, having an ample supply of provisions, tobacco, and perchance a 'drop of the crater' in your saddle-bags, is agreeable; but to persuade a knocked-up animal to do the last ten miles, have an empty belly, and a tongue too parched to smoke, is very trying.

3. To travel over bush roads with a good pair of horses in a sound buggy is exhilarating; but to break a pole with a rearing, kicking brute, twenty miles from home, justifies bad language.

4. To be able to disregard conventionalities, to

go without a collar and coat, and wear gaiters, is jolly; but to have to sew on buttons, patch trousers, and do your own washing, is a nuisance.

5. The freedom of conversation indulged in in the bush is amusing; but low and filthy talk becomes monotonous.

6. To see a female in the bush is refreshing; but to invariably discover her to be below the average bushman in her code of morality is heart-rending.

7. To meet a man of education occasionally is a thing to be appreciated; but to be in the society of individuals who can talk of nothing but shearing, bullock-driving, and 'swiping' for a period of twelve months, might dull a bright intellect.

8. Hunting the kangaroo is a fine exercise; but galloping over a rough country, and thereby laming a favourite horse, is aggravating.

9. Being able to save money is an excellent thing; but having the gift of spending two years' bush-earnings in a fortnight is a sorrowful complaint.

10. Receiving English letters is a delight; but not being able to get them for a month after their delivery in the colony is distressing.

11. Travelling with cattle is a good way of seeing the country; but travelling for five weeks with men whose instincts are below the average of the brute creation may engender premature baldness.

12. To cook dampers, make 'Johnnie' cakes, and boil a 'billy,' are works of art; but to live on bush diet for a lengthy period suggests the possibility of scurvy.

13. To be able to pick up tracks of horses and cattle shows that you possess the bump of Mayne Reid's last hero; but to lose horses in hobbles for three weeks, and then discover them dead lame and hobble-galled, is vexatious.

14. To be nicely tanned by the sun gives a manly appearance; but to have your face skinned daily for a fortnight, and be reduced to the complexion of a Hottentot, is both painful and mortifying.

15. To have false teeth is a capital substitute for none at all; but to break them four hundred miles from town lays you open to attacks of indigestion and ridicule.

16. The sheep is a useful animal; but to work amongst them in a dusty yard, under a tropical sun, is purgatory.

17. To enjoy good health is a blessing; but to break your leg in the bush, with only a drunken blacksmith to set it, is a curse.

18. To write long letters of bush life to English friends is a good practice for the imagination; but to know that the contents are bare-faced lies causes a stricken conscience.

19. To pretend to yourself that you like the bush proves you have powers of self-persuasion; but to wake up in the night, when you are camping out alone, and listen to the wild dogs howling around you, scares all such delusions.

20. To be sober and temperate is conducive to health; but to contract low spirits from want of congenial society, to take to dram-drinking, and die of 'delirium tremens,' is an undesirable end.

21. To finish fifteen years of a vagabond career miserably at the Antipodes is a fit and proper conclusion; but to return to England at the end of that period sound in health, and without a shilling, is a piece of unparalleled impudence.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ARRIVAL AT THE LONDON DOCKS.

AFTER a lengthened sojourn in the colonies, where I had roughed it in every conceivable form, how my heart leapt at the prospect of real civilization once more!

None of your half-and-half touches of civilization, such as I imagined I had been undergoing in Melbourne and the larger colonial cities; but the very perfection of all that we consider comfortable and pleasant—a thorough emancipation, for instance, from all petty annoyances connected with landing; no stupid officials, or thick-headed Custom House officers, but everything done for you quietly, civilly, and without delay, all my business being simply to pay my way. Such were my anticipations.

Let me hasten to undeceive my Australian

friends. I landed at Gravesend, and hurried up to town. If I had only known of the trouble in store for me, my luggage would have accompanied me ashore. Being of an unsuspicious and confiding nature, I left a solitary portmanteau and a canvas bag containing soiled linen on board. A friend also left four small pieces of luggage in his cabin, as he wished to run down to Lincolnshire at once, to see his father.

We agreed to meet by appointment at the London Docks, three days after our departure from the ship at Gravesend. We met; and having collected our few traps, waited for the arrival of a Custom House officer, to obtain the necessary permit to take them on shore. We waited two hours, which perhaps caused us to regard him in an unfavourable light, and prevented us from estimating at Government value his inquisitive attentions. In fact, we even went so far as to insinuate that such matters were managed in the colonies in a much speedier and less offensive manner.

Of course we could not expect him to believe that. He regarded us as so many travelled monkeys, whose object it was to 'stuff' him.

Having obtained a pass, signed by the chief officer of the ship, countersigned and marked 'Correct' by the representative of H.M.'s Customs, we were actually rash enough to wish our ship-board acquaintances good-bye, and send for a cab. Our luggage, consisting of six pieces, the heaviest of which was a moderate-sized port-manteau, was carried from the ship to the cab, a distance of ten yards, at the moderate fee of half a crown.

On attempting to get into the cab, we were assailed by three or four of those bandy-legged, pock-marked ruffians, such as I defy any city in the world save London to produce, and were invited by them to allow them to 'pass' our luggage out of the docks.

'Oh, go to the devil!' we exclaimed, jumping in and banging the door. 'King's Cross Station, cabby.'

'Oh yes! King's Cross, cabby! All wery fine! Wait till yer get out o' the docks, my noble 'eroes, before yer go to King's Cross Station. Better take my advice, capt'in.'

'Drive on, cabby!' I roared.

I then sank back in the cab, under the

happy belief that all our luggage-bother was at an end.

We arrived at the dock gates. There we beheld a portly, ginger-whiskered 'bobby' sucking an orange.

He stopped the cab. We produced the pass.

He demurred: 'Can't help it, sir, you must go back to the office, and pay the dock fees.'

'No such thing,' we replied; 'dock fees be ——! Don't you see that the Customs have signed this paper as "correct" as any card of the races? Don't you perceive our impedimenta consist merely of personal luggage?'

But our appeal had no avail. How young we were! Half a crown judiciously slipped would have banished all that bobby's scruples.

We went to the office, visited twenty or thirty pigeon-holes, and beheld seventy or eighty pale but energetic clerks scribbling away in seventy or eighty ponderous ledgers. At length we were informed it was the wrong office. The right office was about forty yards down the lane, first turning to the right. We pursued our way, and took the 'first turning to the right,' up two steps, and into office No. 2. A row of pigeon-

holes confronted us again. On our side of the pigeon-holes the cemented floor was dirty and damp; the brick wall showed symptoms of having once been whitewashed, and the atmosphere was unwholesome.

Our document was accepted. A variety of questions were asked, as to whether the boxes were of wood, leather, or tin.

I replied, and volunteered all sorts of extra information as to the number of umbrellas, walking-sticks, rugs, etc., in our possession, and how many undervests the foggy climate of this wintry island had induced us to put on.

After some ten minutes' interrogation, and entries in as many ledgers, we were handed some slips of paper, filled up in what we supposed a sufficiently elaborate manner. Not so, however. We were informed that it would be necessary to visit office No. 3, in order to obtain more signatures of very vital importance.

We visited No. 3. It was situated under a shed, and was picturesquely barricaded by a few thousand wool-bales. To dodge between these bales, and avoid being cut off short at the knees by the trucks which were flying about in every

direction, required a display of considerable activity.

Our spirits were now somewhat dashed, and the submissive way in which we answered all impertinent inquiries would have quickened the energies and awakened the sympathies of any individual in the world, save a London wharfinger. About a quarter of an hour saw us through No. 3, but to our rage and despair we were again referred back to No. 2. Now the old adage says, 'A worm will turn.' We never saw one turn, but we dare say he will; and on our second visit to office No. 2, we felt inclined very much to 'turn.' We talked loudly about thundering old monarchies, and threw out dark hints of our determination to 'call on the premier in the morning, and let him know all about it.'

At last we got the correct number of signatures, and found that from the time of our leaving the ship, the business had taken exactly one hour and a half. To sum up our grievances: the delay in an offensive atmosphere, expenses for dock dues, cab waiting, and odd shillings extorted by the irrepressible lazzaroni—fifteen shillings, and loss of temper.

As we drove off, we reflected, and we concluded that the Government of Great Britain was a paternal Government. It provided occupation for legions of the genteel indigent, keeping hundreds of clerks at one dock, simply to keep a record of the passengers' luggage that comes ashore. Besides, it is a far-seeing Government, for these clerks are self-supporting. The charges as made on such trifles as our luggage, if applied on the same scale to all goods landed at the dock, must not only pay all their salaries, but bring in a very considerable revenue to the much-pillaged treasury of the Old Empire.

THE END.

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[*Copy.*] *Government House, Melbourne, January 16th,* 1884.

'DEAR MADAM,—I am honoured by your request that I should allow the Memorial Volume of your late husband's works to be dedicated to me. I am very chary about dedications, because I never feel I deserve them. But this one, perhaps, I am least unworthy of, and therefore, if you think that my name can be of the slightest service to the book, pray make use of it as you please.

'I say that I am not wholly unworthy of this honour, and for this reason. I think, perhaps, that of those who live in England I am one of the oldest and warmest of your husband's admirers; so warm that I remember, when I read of his death, feeling that my visit to Australia (which had always been a floating dream of mine) would lose one great attraction to me in his absence. Long ago I fell upon "HIS NATURAL LIFE" by accident, and read it not once or twice, but many times, at different periods. Since then I have frequently given away copies to men whose opinions I valued, and have always received from them the same opinion as to the extraordinary power of the book.

'There can, indeed, I think, be no two opinions as to the horrible fascination of the work. The reader who takes it up and gets beyond the Prologue—which is for many reasons the least satisfactory, albeit a very necessary part of the narrative—though he cannot but be harrowed by the long agony of the story and the human anguish of every page, is unable to lay it down: almost in spite of himself he has to read and to suffer to the bitter end. To me, I confess, it is the most terrible of all novels, more terrible than "Oliver Twist," or Victor Hugo's most startling effects, for the simple reason that it is more real. It has all the solemn ghastliness of truth.

'Since I have been in Australia I have employed some of the little time at my disposal in carefully examining the blue-books on which "HIS NATURAL LIFE" is founded, and during my recent visit to Tasmania I made some personal inquiries on the same subject. The result has been to bring conviction to my mind that the case is not one whit overstated—nay, that the fact in some particulars is more frightful than the fiction. Perhaps the most appalling chapter in the book is that which describes the escape and cannibalism of Gabbett, yet this is taken with almost verbal accuracy from the narrative of the escape of Pearce and Cox from Macquarie Harbour, in the appendix of the Transportation Report of 1837-38. That this should be so only enhances, to my mind, the merit of the book. The materials for great works of imagination lie all round us; but it is genius that selects and transposes them.

'I fancy that your husband's works are not sufficiently appreciated in Australia. I am sure that they are insufficiently appreciated in Great Britain. It is not, perhaps, wonderful as regards Great Britain, but it is certainly wonderful (if it be true) as regards Australia. For it is rare, I think, that so young a country has produced so great a literary force. I cannot believe but that the time must soon come when Australians will feel a melancholy pride in this true son of genius, and Australian genius. While as they read his greatest work (written when he was but twenty-five) they cannot but be thrilled at the thought that the bright present they enjoy is separated by so narrow an interval of time from the infernal tragedy portrayed therein. And in England you may find that, like another power in the world of letters, not dissimilar in genius—I mean Emily Brontë—he may have made up to him in posthumous honour what was lacking in his lifetime.

'Sincerely yours,

(*Signed*) 'ROSEBERY.'

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